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ABSTRACT

This document is comprised of 7 issues of a newsletter for the 25 leaders of citywide after-school initiatives in major cities across the United States who comprise the Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide After-School Initiatives, funded through the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Each issue of the newsletter provides information on a particular issue related to after-school programs, and describes programs in various cities in a "City Spotlight" column. The foci of the issues in this document are: (1) program accountability (November 2000); (2) staff recruitment, orientation, and professional development (March 2001); (3) emerging roles in the field, such as technology teachers, youth advocates, and trainers (June 2001); (4) building a skilled and stable workforce (Special Issue); (5) partnerships with schools (November 2001); (6) setting standards (March 2002); and (7) Focusing on connections (May 2002). Some issues include information on resources for after-school initiatives. (KB)

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After School Issues, 2000-2002

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ISSUE 1:
Focus on Accountability

Issues

City Spotlight

SAN FRANCISCO'S BEACON INITIATIVE

The San Francisco Beacon Initiative has built its "accountability" system using a theory of change approach. With input from a wide variety of stakeholders, the Beacon Initiative constructed a road map for the project that articulates how its long term goals can be achieved through meeting key early and intermediate outcomes. To keep the project on track, the Beacon Initiative expects players at systems, intermediary and community levels to be held "accountable" for specific accomplishments within specified timeframes. This multi-tiered accountability model is based on the belief that the Beacon Initiative's success is contingent on change at all levels.

Accountability at the Systems' Level
While systems change is often difficult to measure, the Beacon Initiative has made it a priority to articulate those specific accomplishments believed to be pivotal to achieving broader goals. For instance, one early outcome identified for systems level partners was to help negotiate a preliminary, city-wide agreement between Beacon centers and their public school hosts. Another was the creation of unified reporting requirements by the city, 12 private funders, and the school district. This has allowed sites to avoid having to comply with differing forms, and requirements, thereby preserving resources for other initiative activities.

Site Level Accountability: Web-based MIS System
One of the unique features of the Beacon accountability model is its creation of a web-based MIS system that is used to collect program usage data from sites on a continuous basis. The type of data collected within this system was designed to match the initiatives' definition of "What it means to be a Beacon." Information on attendance, activity offerings and participation, hours of operation, room usage, and other items is collected through this system, which requires a full-time person at each site to maintain. This detailed documentation of site activity is believed to be critical to articulating the Beacon model for further dissemination and adaptation.

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Measuring What Matters

Meeting the high-stakes accountability challenge on our own terms

Increasingly, leaders of large after-school initiatives are being held accountable for the results of their efforts. How is the expenditure of unprecedented sums of public and private money benefiting children, youth and families? Are projects delivering the outcomes they promised? Measuring the impact of initiatives that operate within complex and often daunting social conditions, however, is not easy. As expectations mount for projects to demonstrate results leaders must learn to master a balancing act that satisfies the public's desire for immediate benefits with the need to find authentic and effective ways to measure, track, and report on their efforts.

Accountability Focused on Results: Possibilities & Pitfalls
In the past two decades, the term accountability has undergone an evolution. Our society has moved away from a system that measures the value of programs by monitoring expenditures and activities, to one which emphasizes proven results. These days, the important question is not what have you done, but rather, what difference did it make? For many initiatives, being able to show a documented impact is critically linked to financial survival, and, therefore, has become a subject of great urgency.

Initiatives using results as the focus of their accountability system must articulate their expected outcomes and use performance benchmarks and indicators to measure their progress. While this new approach brings with it a number of advantages, the shift to results-based accountability also brings challenges.

Potential Benefits, include:

- After-school initiatives that are more intentional, focused and effective.
- Increased public confidence in the efficacy of out-of-school time initiatives and programs.
- Increased recognition of the valuable role played by after-school intermediary organizations, and of the true cost of achieving desired outcomes at both site and systems levels.
- Fewer rules and regulations, thereby giving projects more local control

Produced by the **National Institute on Out-of-School Time**
for the **Cross Cities Network for Leaders of City-Wide After School Initiatives**

City Spotlight

BOSTON'S OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT PILOT PROJECT

In Boston, Mayor Menino's 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative, in partnership with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, has just launched a pilot project to measure outcomes and, ultimately, build an accountability structure based on program perspectives.

A Focus on Children and Youth
A direct outgrowth of the May, 2000, Mayor's Task Force Report, "Schools Alone are Not Enough" the Outcomes Measurement Pilot Project aims to help five sites better define their goals for children and become more intentional and effective in their approach. Through providing needed resources and consulting assistance, the Outcomes Pilot Project plans to help programs identify expected outcomes in five developmental areas, then track their progress in meeting the individual needs of children. By building their internal capacity to document and measure improvement, it is hoped that programs will be able to improve their practice as well as to articulate the impact of their work on the lives of children and youth.

Building an Accountability Structure from the Bottom Up
Based on the experiences of the five programs involved in the pilot, the Outcomes Measurement Pilot Project hopes to identify a set of expected outcomes for children and youth that is common to a wide variety of programs. This information could then be used to build consensus around suitable indicators of success.

The 2:00-to-6:00 Initiative and the United Way believe this project will contribute to an increased understanding of which outcomes can be appropriately and feasibly attributed to out-of-school time programs as well as an increased recognition of the level of resources needed if programs are to achieve these positive outcomes for children.

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Measuring What Matters

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and the opportunity to become more innovative, collaborative, and flexible.

Potential Risks, include:

- Initiatives and programs may be drawn towards activities that yield immediate successes and away from complex problems and difficult cases.
- Reduced procedural protections may result in discrimination, fraud, or poor service.
- If expectations for desired outcomes are not realistic, and, therefore, are not achieved, a negative public image and reduced financial support could result.

(HFRP, 1998; Schorr, 1997; C. Weiss, 1998)

Measuring What Matters

Amidst the flurry of political attention and unprecedented allocation of dollars, the out-of-school time field faces both opportunities and risks. How can after-school initiatives sustain public hopes for their projects when, as Ken Wing (2000) asserts, "Many worthy results take a lot longer to accomplish than the attention span of most stakeholders?" Will initiatives succeed if they attempt to answer to stakeholders' expectations—or will they end up falling short and ultimately jeopardizing the current wave of public support?

So much of the accountability challenge is wrapped up in what gets measured. Which data genuinely reflect what initiatives are doing—and how well they're doing it? Which benchmarks are likely to reveal progress, and which are likely to disappoint? Which outcomes are realistic and appropriate to the scope of the project? How can projects find indicators that satisfy a wide range of audiences and provide information that stakeholders will value and understand? How do initiatives balance public demands for immediate, quantifiable results with the desire of practitioners for individualized, qualitative feedback to guide improvements?

Perhaps part of the answer lies in shaping public expectations to more closely and authentically align with what projects are actually trying to achieve. After-school initiatives should communicate the distinction between the specific outcomes that can and should be linked to their efforts and the broader societal benefits towards which they may play a positive and influential role but for which they should not be held exclusively accountable. Finding ways to accurately track progress and communicate the value of contributions made by out-of-school time programs may require a substantial investment of time and resources, but it will be well worth the effort if it ensures that initiatives are held accountable for what matters.

– *Wendy Boynton Surr, NIOST Associate*

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Thoughts on Accountability

"Accountability is not reserved for the community level stakeholders. Systems' level people have to be accountable too. It's not about writing a check and passing along the responsibility to the community."
— Sam Piha, San Francisco Beacon Initiative, San Francisco, CA

"It's a challenge to meet their expectations. But it's an even greater challenge to have the courage to go beyond what they want to hear, to what they need to hear."
— Billie Young, Project Lift-Off, Seattle, WA

"It's very difficult to get people to agree on what is valuable and what's worth knowing. The biggest lesson we've learned is that "no one size fits all."
— Connie Spinner, Children and Youth Investment Corp., Washington, DC

"In Baltimore, we believe that when organizations are held accountable for their own improvement, the system needs to be program-driven. They need to use standards to assess where they are, where they want to grow, and what they need to do to get there."
— Jacke Schroeder, Family League of Baltimore City, Baltimore, MD

"Traditionally...accountability has been limited to inputs-what was bought and how wisely the money was spent. This "audit" mentality may have ensured that the ledger books were in order, but it provided little information about whether programs had their intended impact."
— Karen Horsch, Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, MA

"The out-of-school landscape in Boston is diverse. There are so many different types of programs serving different age groups. The question is: How do we use that diversity as a strength? How can we build consensus and ultimately, an accountability structure, which focuses on kids?"
— Mannell Yoders, 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative, Boston, MA

"...the shift to results-based accountability must be made carefully and thoughtfully...it must be led by those who care about both the process and the results, and not left to those who find it easy because they don't understand the issues."
— Lisbeth Schorr (1995)

Some Ways to Improve Your Accountability System...

1. Begin with a strategic plan that identifies key early, intermediate and long-term outcomes.
2. Select a small number of measurable outcomes that you are confident will demonstrate impact within a reasonable time frame.
3. Select indicators that are relatively easy to measure and most relevant to the primary purpose and stage of your efforts.
4. Select indicators that are considered important and meaningful by the widest range of stakeholders: policy makers, funders, front-line practitioners, administrators, and citizens. They should be persuasive to skeptics as well as to supporters.
5. Plan to collect some data documenting activities and processes, to increase your ability to report on progress and be able to explain unexpected positive and negative outcomes down the road.
6. Dedicate sufficient time, personnel and resources to your accountability effort.

(HFRP, 1998; O'Donnell & Galinsky, 1998; Schorr, 1995 & 1997; United Way of America, 1999)

City Spotlight

BALTIMORE'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME STRATEGY

In the past year, the Safe and Sound Campaign has spearheaded an ambitious new initiative designed to expand and improve out-of-school time programs for children and youth throughout the city of Baltimore. With 7 million dollars in funding to oversee at 96 sites during the first year, Baltimore's new Out-of-Schoo Time Strategy has made accountability a priority.

Building a Responsive Accountability System
Partnering with the Family League of Baltimore City, the OST Strategy Team has worked to design an accountability system that involves and reflects the community.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SYSTEM INCLUDE:

Quality Standards: The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care were modified with input from the community to reflect both programming for adolescents and the range and types of Baltimore programs.

Individual Improvement Plans: Each pro gram was asked to conduct a self-assessment and to articulate the steps and resources needed to meet the Standards within a three-year period. Programs wil be held accountable for implementing these plans.

Management Information System: A user-friendly data collection system was created to aid programs in tracking and reporting enrollment, attendance, program offerings and participation data.

Site Visits: Contract Managers visit sites to observe practitioners and facilities, review records and monitor progress.

Links with Schools to Collect Baseline Data: The OST Strategy Team is working with Baltimore Public Schools to collect information on individual student performance. This data is seen as critical for monitoring progress and demonstrating the impact of the initiative down the road.

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After School Issues

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The Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide After-School Initiatives

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For further information, contact Erik Rosengren at 781-283-2530, or visit our web site at www.niost.org.

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Meeting the high-stakes accountability challenge on our own terms

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March 2001

ISSUE 2:
Focus on Staffing

After School Issues

Ready to Roll

Five Cities Share their Experience with Recruiting, Orienting and First Year Training of After-School Staff

There is no question about it. The after-school field is facing a major staffing shortage. The long-awaited arrival of public recognition and funding for after-school programs has spawned dozens of ambitious campaigns across the country seeking to create citywide programs for children and youth. This rapid scaling up has created a huge demand for qualified employees. At the same time, a strong economy in many cities has increased the competition for staff. For many initiatives, staying fully staffed has become a frustrating exercise of laboriously finding and developing the skills of staff members, only to see them leave for higher paying, full-time work shortly thereafter.

What can be done?

In several states, city after-school leaders are involved in efforts to craft long-term solutions to the staffing shortage. Some of these initiatives include wage and career ladders, scholarship programs, registries for tracking professional development, and credentialing opportunities. While system-wide developments such as these may ultimately help organizations attract and retain more qualified staff, the reality is that after-school programs, large and small, are scrambling to fill positions. To address these immediate and pressing staffing needs, many after-school initiatives are creatively exploring local strategies for recruiting, orienting and training first year staff. The leaders we spoke with in New York City, Los Angeles, San Diego, Denver and Chicago are coping with the staffing challenge in different ways. Here are a few of their stories, strategies, and reflections.

Produced by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time for the Cross Cities Network for Leaders of City-Wide After School Initiatives. Written by Wendy B. Surr, NIOST Associate.
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or visit
our web site at www.niost.org

Recruitment

How are after-school initiatives finding qualified staff?

The question, "Where should I look for staff?" may have a very different answer depending on who you speak with. Differences in a program's design, philosophy, funding source, lead agency, or licensing requirements result in a range of personnel needs. Some programs rely heavily on public school teachers, others are activity-based and seek activity specialists. Some after-school organizations look to the community for the majority of their staff. Still others must meet state licensing standards when hiring staff, and therefore seek out those with specific education and experience in the field of after-school. Many after-school initiatives use diverse staffing patterns which mix general staff with specialists, volunteers, parents and public school teachers—creating a myriad of recruitment and management challenges for site coordinators.

Despite distinct differences, the after-school leaders we spoke with shared a number of successful recruitment strategies. Here a just a few examples.

Create a strong, positive reputation and good relationships within the community.

LA's BEST:
LA's BEST Chief Operating Officer, Debe Loxton, credits their strong community connections as the key to LA's BEST's success in attracting and retaining staff members. "Before opening a site," explains Loxton, "we would talk to people. We would meet with the parent group from the school. We would go out into the surrounding neighborhood and get to know people." Through taking the time to gain an understanding of the community, its needs, interests and individuals, each LA's BEST site was able to use informal community networks and "word of mouth" as their primary mode of recruitment. Loxton adds that LA's BEST's strong public image also significantly increased the attractiveness of this organization as a great place to work.

Related Strategies

- Make public relations a priority for your initiative. Create a buzz. Word of mouth is then much more effective when recruiting.
- Forge relationships with organizations within your community to build local networks for finding staff.
- Be sure to have a positive, welcoming spirit in all external communication. Send the message, "Come join the fun."

Forge Strong Partnerships with Other Organizations to Find Staff and Create Full-Time, Year Round Positions through Creative Job Combinations.

New York:
Many of NYC's The After-School Corporation (TASC) grantees are community-based organizations (CBO's) offering a range of programs supported by multiple public and private funding sources. As a result, many after-school staff members at TASC-supported sites play a variety of roles through one single employer. A staff member might be the Parent Liaison for a United Way-funded drop-out prevention program in the morning, and then might stay on to be an Activities Specialist with youth in the afternoon. "The masters of this are the settlement houses," explains TASC's Director of Training and Technical Assistance Lorna Palacio Morgan. "They learned long ago that to retain good people they need to mix funding and patch together full-time employment and bene-

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fits. While these CBO-School partnerships are school-based, the staff represent the full range of community and city partners."

Related Strategies

- Ulilize educational aides from host schools/districts.
- Create formal links with colleges in order to place students as interns, work-study students, or volunteers through Americorps or America Reads.
- Connect with other youth-serving agencies to share staff and/or place older youth as junior staff in programs serving elementary school children.

Use Existing Staff as a Recruitment Resource.

Denver:
Denver's After-School Director, Shirley Farnsworth, sees her existing staff as her primary recruitment resource, and credits good retention with reducing the need to recruit. She uses a variety of strategies, including: offering existing staff members referral bonuses for finding friends to work in program; requiring new staff to pay for their own CPR/first Aid training and reimbursing them if they stay in their positions for the year; and awarding a $200 bonus to returning staff each year.

Related Strategies

- Build administrators' skills and create the internal structure needed to effectively manage staff members' diverse backgrounds, styles and schedules.
- Be as welcoming and flexible about the qualifications of new, entry-level staff members as possible. Then, be sure to create the training and support structure needed to guide their growth and build their skills.
- Host and/or attend Job Fairs and other larger scale hiring opportunities.

SAN DIEGO'S "6 TO 6" INITIATIVE

In 1995, San Diego's Mayor, Susan Golding, declared that their city would be the first in the nation to offer before- and after-school services in every public elementary and middle school within three years.

"I honestly didn't think it was going to be possible," explains Deb Ferrin, the Child Care Coordinator for the City of San Diego. "We had 36 months to open programs in 171 schools. Somehow we had to find, hire and train over 800 people. When I stop to think about it, it's amazing that we pulled it off."

How did they pull it off? Ferrin explains that the key to their success was a combination of strategic planning and pure luck. "We had a system for recruiting staff at each site." First, "6 to 6" recruited from within each host school. They looked for parents, teacher aides, and regular schoolteachers. "Because the school was laying off large numbers of aides at the time," Ferrin explains, "We really got lucky. We scooped up the aides as quickly as we could."

The next approach was to create partnerships with all area colleges and universities. "We contacted the departments of child development, education, recreation, counseling and work study offices." "6 to 6" systematically set up relationships with ten colleges, gaining over 200 students through the Americorps program alone. "Americorps provided a terrific incentive for staff to stay because they received $2,500 towards tuition or other education expenses if they remained for the full nine months."

The third approach utilized by "6 to 6" was to recruit staff members from within the community. "We found most of our community staff members through word of mouth. What really gave our recruitment efforts a boost was the incredible publicity our initiative was receiving. I think having that positive image really helped us attract staff."

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Orienting Staff

How are after-school initiatives preparing staff members for their new roles and responsibilities?

Integrating a staff member into his or her new role presents many challenges and opportunities for after-school organizations. A new staff member's first few weeks often sets the stage for his or her later performance, attitudes, and philosophy towards working with children and youth in the program. Furthermore, it is during the first few months that many new staff members will leave their positions. What are some of the strategies after-school organizations are using to successfully orient and support staff during this critical period? Here are a few examples.

Convey and reinforce core messages.

San Diego:
"All our CBO's handled the initial orientation of staff in their own way. We realized that they also needed something more. They needed to hear the city's message—what we expected from them," explains San Diego's Child Care Coordinator, Deb Ferrin. "So, every fall we bring all the new staff together and tell them why the city is funding after-school programs, why what they do is so important, and what we're looking for from them."

Match new staff with veteran staff members.

Denver:
The Kaleidoscope Corner programs of Denver believe in promoting a strong team philosophy for children as well as staff. Reflecting this belief, at the start of each school year all new staff members are included in two days of training, along with fellow team members from their site.
Subsequently, new staff members are matched up with seasoned staff members to guide them through their first few months on the job. This expectation for mentoring is part of the job descriptions for all lead staff and site coordinators.

Increase new staff members' enthusiasm and commitment by building on their interests and talents.

New York:
New staff members often feel that they have little to contribute when they lack the skills and experience of their more seasoned peers. This self-perception can lead new staff members to quickly lose interest in their positions. To help address this issue, one of The After-school Corporation's NYC sites encourages staff members to come up with and present their own ideas for a weekly activity club. The staff member with the best suggestion is allowed to lead the activity. To help them in developing their ideas, staff members are given an Activity Handbook as well as samples of lesson plans.

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What's in the Works?

Senator Christopher Dodd, (D) CN, is introducing "FOCUS" (Focus on Committed and Underpaid Staff), national legislation designed to award grants to providers and staff in order to support quality improvements. For more information contact: www.ccw.org.

National Institute on Out of School Time: An upcoming article entitled Professional Development Systems: The State of the States—by Ellen Gannett, Associate Dir. of NIOST, with Darci Smith, Dir. of CALSAC (The California School-Age Coalition), and Judy Nee, Director, Center for Youth Programs, Florida Atlantic University, will be published Spring 2001.
Expanded information on recruitment, orientation and training will soon be available on the NIOST web site: www.niost.org

The Center for the Child Care Workforce is releasing a School-Age staff addenda to their Model Work Standards, due out Spring 2001. (See Resource section.)

LA'S BEST

Helping New Staff Members Translate Philosophy into Practice

"Our job is to translate our meaning and philosophy into practice. We believe that you must take people where they are and move them towards leadership."
– Debe Loxton Chief Operating Officer, LA's BEST

"In a positive youth development approach, youth are not seen as problems to be solved, but as resource to be developed." At LA's BEST, this guiding philosophy applies equally to staff and youth. Staff members are viewed as assets. From day one, LA's BEST site coordinators communicate to new staff members that "they already know a great deal about how to work with youth," and that the strength of the program relies on their willingness to share these individual talents and interests with children.

To support staff members as they strive to fulfill these expectations, LA's BEST uses two main orientation and training methods. The first centers around the delivery and reinforcement of core messages. LA's BEST has a strong philosophy developed over its 12 years of operations. To best convey these beliefs to new staff members, LA's BEST has developed a series of staff guides and videos which outline roles and responsibilities and clearly illustrate how the LA's BEST philosophy is translated into practice. Before beginning work at their sites, all new staff members are expected to review/view these orientation products and discuss the LA's BEST approach with their site coordinator. These LA's BEST core messages are then reinforced by lead staff and administrators throughout a staff member's tenure in the program.

"Nothing we do–no activity, no program, no event–is as important as the effect that it has on the child."
– LA's Best After-school Enrichment Program Staff Guide

The second component of LA's BEST orientation approach involves partnering Traveling Activities Consultants and Traveling Supervisors with Site Coordinators to guide each staff member's development. "During that first year," explains Debe Loxton, "the Site Coordinator closely observes the new staff member. If she sees her/him struggling–if there is that disconnect–she'll call in the Activities Consultant. What happens next is that the Activities Consultant essentially "camps out" at that site and works with that staff member until she/he has mastered the skills needed to do a better job." Since Activity Consultants do not act in a supervisory role, they become almost like outside advisors or mentors for new staff members. This allows staff to discuss their problems and questions more freely, opening them up for greater change and growth.

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First Year Training of Staff

How are after-school organizations helping new staff members build their skills?

For after-school organizations, the challenges involved in training first year staff can be daunting. Unlike so many other fields, where employees can enter a workplace with little or no experience and progress gradually, in an after-school setting even entry-level employees need to master a wide range of fairly complex skills before they can be effective in their work with children and youth. Due to the part-time nature of most after-school positions, many new staff members spend their off-hours attending school or holding down second jobs, leaving little time, energy or incentive for them to participate in training. Cities differ greatly in their philosophies and emphasis on the training of first year staff. Here are a few examples illustrating their common beliefs.

Determine core competency areas.

Denver and New York:
Denver's Kaleidoscope programs and NYC's The After-School Corporation initiative have identified core areas that serve as the focus of training for staff members during their first year. While the two cities have different approaches to training entry-level staff, both agree that new staff should develop skills in the following areas:

- Safety, including first aid and CPR
- Group Management
- Conflict Resolution, and
- Appropriate Practices with Children and Youth

Offer training that is hands-on and relates directly to staff members' daily work with children/youth.

San Diego:
San Diego's "6 to 6" initiative believes that staff respond best to training that is not only hands-on, but also allows staff members to immediately try out new ideas in their programs. "We always make sure–whatever the topic is–that people can take something back to their programs and use it that day. When we offered a workshop on math games, we brought in a laminator so folks could actually make the games right there. When we introduced staff to the School-age Environmental Rating Scale, we gave each of them a SACERS manual and rating sheets."

Partner with colleges, or link with state agencies or career initiatives, in order to offer certificates, credits or wage incentives to staff for participating in training.

Chicago:
All new staff members from City of Chicago funded youth and school-age programs are encouraged to take a 32-hour course entitled Advancing Youth Development (AYD) within their first few months of service. Upon completion of the AYD course, participants receive a Youth Worker Certificate. The AYD training is offered through two key intermediary organizations: the Chicago Youth Agency Partnership—for youth workers; and the MOST Initiative—for school-age workers. Participants can also take the course for credit from several Chicago-area colleges. One local university recognizes the course as part of its four-year undergraduate program in Youth Work. Plans are currently underway to make completion of the AYD course a requirement for all staff members working in City of Chicago-funded programs, as well as to link receipt of the Youth Worker certificate to wage increases.

• For more information on the AYD curriculum, check out the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work in the Resources section.

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New York City's After-school Corporation:

What Should Every Staff Member Know?

It was during the first year of NYC's After-school Corporation (TASC) initiative when, as Director of Training and Technical Assistance, Lorna Palacio Morgan recalls, "We had this epiphany. Wait a minute! These young staff members need their own training. We realized that for many new staff members this was their first job. So we started to re-think our approach to training by asking the question: how can we tailor training to the widely varying skill levels of after-school staff? How do we build on the lessons learned as result of our first year?"

It was from that point on that TASC quickly developed an extensive series of graduated training opportunities designed to meet the differing needs of staff members. The continuum of workshops now ranges from core training modules for young people to week-long advanced institutes for seasoned staff and administrators. Some of TASC's offerings include: Supervising the Young Adult Employee, Managing Volunteers, and Engaging Parents in Using Technology. During the 2000/2001 year, TASC will sponsor nearly 300 training sessions in all five boroughs of NYC. In order to deliver such a wide range of training opportunities, TASC has linked up with several training partners, including: The Partnership for After-school Education (PASE), Bank Street College, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, and Columbia University Business School/Not-For Profit Management Institute.

One of TASC's contributions to the training arena has been the development of three first-year core knowledge training modules: one for young adults, one for new front-line staff, and one for new site coordinators. These core trainings were developed in conjunction with PASE.

Young Adult Employee Training (for ages 15-21)

This one-day, six hour training offered through PASE is specifically designed to meet the needs of young adults working in after-school programs. The training is divided into two sections. The Job Readiness portion of the training strives to help young people recognize that they have the capacity to serve as role models for participating children. It focuses on helping them understand appropriate dress, speech and conduct. The Strategies and Ideas portion allows young people to experiment with conducting age-appropriate activities. Facilitators help participants identify the objective of activities and model positive group management strategies. Once a young person has completed this core training, he/she is invited to participate in Adult Core Training. Young adult participants are given a stipend and a public transportation pass for attending the training.

Core Knowledge Training for New Staff

This one-day, six hour training is designed to provide new adult staff with a foundation in four main areas: Safety, including first aid and CPR; Developmentally Appropriate Practices; Group Management; and Conflict Resolution. Under conflict resolution, TASC includes sections such as Culture and Conflict, and Drama and Conflict Resolution.

New Site Coordinator Training Institute

This five-day Institute is divided into two sections. The first section is a two-day program for Site Coordinators, either before or immediately after beginning their positions. The Coordinators are given an orientation to understand their role as managers, and a framework for beginning to plan and operate their program, including the hiring of staff, budgeting, reporting, etc. At this first session they are encouraged to establish connections with other Site Coordinators for peer support. The second section of the Site Coordinator's Core Training is scheduled approximately six weeks later. It is designed to build on the "real-life" challenges and issues that Coordinators are experiencing, helping them refine their skills and give and receive peer support.

Contact: Lorna Palacio Morgan, Director of Training, Technical Assistance and Resource Development for The After-School Corporation.
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Resources

The After-School Corporation (TASC) is leading a state-wide initiative designed to expand and improve after-school opportunities for youth in more than 150 programs in New York City. Policy Studies Associates, Inc. the independent evaluator for the project, has published a number of Resource Briefs related to staffing issues, including: *Matching After-school Staff to Project Needs and Activities, Identifying Staffing Needs and Recruiting Qualified Staff*, and a *Tool Kit—Building the Skills of After-School Staff*. TASC also offers workshops for administrators on the topics of recruitment, hiring and staff development, including: "*Non-Traditional Recruitment Strategies.*" Check out their web site: www.tascorp.org or contact Lorna Palacio Morgan, Director of Training, Technical Assistance and Resource Development. E-mail: lmorgan@tascorp.org

The California Department of Education/Child Development Division in collaboration with the University of CA, Irvine released a report, *School-Age Care and After-School Programs in California: A Study of the Options for Training, Certification and Professional Development*. 1999. CDE Press, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA. For more information call (916) 445-1260 or check out their web site: www.cde.ca.gov

The Center for the Child Care Workforce is involved in a wide range of activities designed to improve wages, working conditions and the professional status of child care staff members. Some of their projects include: the Worthy Wage Network; the publication *Creating Better Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards for Early childhood Staff*. 1998. (*An addenda to these standards for School-age Staff is due out Spring, 2001*); *Taking on Turnover: An Action Guide for Child Care Center Teachers and Directors* (Whitebook & Bellm, 1999), as well as a monthly newsletter entitled *Rights, Raises and Respect*. For more information check out their web site: www.ccw.org. Or call (800) UR-WORTHY.

The Institute for Literacy Studies at Lehman College, New York has released "*Supporting Community Learning: A Staff Development and Resource Guide for After-school Youth-Education Programs*". 1995. Hill, Sara Louisa, Townsend, Leno O., Lawrence, Anne, Shevin, Jonathan, Ingalls, Susan. Authors. For more information call (718) 960-8054 or send E-mail: lena@alpha.lehman.cuny.edu

The National Training Institute for Community Youth Work has produced *Advancing Youth Development: A curriculum for Training Youth Workers (AYD) 1996*. This curriculum was developed with support of the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and is a collaborative project of the Academy of Educational Development (AED)/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, and the National Network for Youth. AED also offers *Training Youth Workers at the Community Level: A Resource Kit*. 1996. For more information on AED resources, check out the AED web-site: www.aed.org/youth_worker.html

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time has been at the forefront of advances in the field of after-school and staff training for over 20 years. The NIOST web site offers a broad array of resources and information related to staffing issues, including the results of the MA Recruitment and Retention Project, *Building a Stable High-Quality After-School Workforce, a fall 2000 article appearing in Spotlight*, a **M.O.S.T.** (Making the Most of After-school Time) publication, and a chart of national efforts to improve staff recruitment and retention. The NIOST web site also offers numerous articles, books and videos related to staffing issues: www.niost.org

The National Women's Law Center has released a report, *Expanding Possibilities: Be all that You can Be: Lessons from the Military for Improving our Nations Child Care System*, Applebaum, Judith, C., Campbell, Nancy Duff, Martin, Emily Martinson, Karin, authors. April, 2000. This report is available on their web-site: www.NWLC.org

School-Age Notes publishes a monthly newsletter on issues related to the school-age field. The School-age Notes web site also offers a broad array of staff development resources through their on-line catalog: www.AfterSchoolCatalog.com

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June 2001

ISSUE 3:
Emerging Roles in the Field

After School Issues

New Roles Are Emerging

Will Practitioners Soon Have a More Expanded Career Menu?

Finding and keeping good staff members is clearly one of the major challenges facing after-school leaders. Over the past several months, we conducted interviews with a number of after-school leaders from across the country to identify successful strategies for addressing staffing issues. It has become clear from these discussions that there are a growing number of new career options being created for staff in many cities. This publication of After-School Issues, therefore, features in-depth information on this new trend as a way of offering readers fresh ideas for meeting staffing challenges.

The Staffing Challenge

After-school leaders across the country are experiencing the pressure of trying to achieve multiple goals simultaneously—goals which can often be in conflict with each other. Funders, politicians, business leaders, and other community members want programs to execute ambitious plans for rapid expansion. At the same time, they also want programs to maintain—or enhance—their level of quality so that they will contribute to broader social goals, such as increased academic achievement, decreased delinquency and substance abuse, and greater community and parental involvement.

The pressure to simultaneously increase the size, scope, and impact of services has left many after-school programs facing personnel shortages. Many administrators are having difficulty not only in finding enough staff to reach desired adult/youth ratios, but also in finding staff members with the skills and experience needed to help programs achieve a growing list of expected outcomes.

Persistent staffing issues endemic to the after-school field, such as the part-time nature of the work, low wages, and the limited number of opportunities and choices for advancement and professional growth, have only exacerbated the challenges facing administrators who are trying to attract and retain staff in the current climate.

Produced by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time for the Cross Cities Network for Leaders of City-Wide After School Initiatives. Written by Wendy B. Surr, NIOST Associate.
This publication was made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author.

The Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide After-School Initiatives

The Cross-Cities Network is composed of 25 leaders of citywide after-school initiatives in major cities across the United States. The Network brings leaders together on a regular basis to explore common issues and develop personal relationships to sustain their work. The project is staffed by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In addition to bi-annual meetings, NIOST provides staff support for the following Network activities: weekly email updates from members; topical briefs on requested issues; research reports; and a database of initiative members.

For further information, please contact NIOST at 781-283-2547

or write

National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02481-8203

or visit our web site at www.niost.org

Issues

Change is in the Air

While staffing continues to be a difficult issue, there may be a glimmer of hope on the horizon. Widespread expansion in the field has led to new opportunities. New after-school roles are emerging in initiatives around the country, many of which are providing staff members with full-time jobs and the opportunity to advance in their careers. At the same time, professional development systems, career incentives, and specialized training approaches are being established to help prepare staff for both traditional and emerging roles. The result has been the creation of a richer and more varied career path for a growing number of practitioners.

The sheer size of after-school initiatives in some cities has resulted in a steady expansion of full-time positions in order to help manage day-to-day services and ensure internal standards of quality across dozens of sites. In many locations, expanding after-school services has also led to unprecedented levels of coordination and collaboration amongst a widening circle of players. This interweaving of organizations and their mutual goals has resulted in the sharing of staff members, dual staff roles, and the creation of a whole new range of full and part-time career opportunities for staff members. In an increasing number of cases, the creative melding of organizational needs has allowed staff to assume full-time positions with benefits.

What are some of these new opportunities for staff?

Through our conversations with over one dozen after-school leaders from across the country, we have discovered a diversity of new roles emerging from the field.

For example, in California, **L.A.'s BEST** has a cadre of **Traveling Activities Specialists** who serve as mentors and consultants to their 70 sites, offering staff and site coordinators the benefit of their guidance and expertise in curriculum design, staff development, and staff-child relations.

In Texas, the **YMCA of San Antonio & the Hill Country**, through its School Beyond School initiative, has created **campus-based Program Directors**. These Program Directors operate on the school campus and work in tandem with public school teachers in order to enrich students' learning experiences and connect academics to real life and future vocations. The YMCA provides experiential learning activities related to the school day curriculum during school, after school and on school holidays.

In Kansas City, as an outgrowth of the **Caring Communities Initiative**, nearly one dozen full-time **Neighborhood Services Coordinator** positions have been created. These "community mobilizers" provide leadership training to local citizens and promote neighborhood involvement in, and support of, before and after-school programs.

While the creation of new roles alone will not remedy the field's staffing problems, the examples that follow highlight a trend that is already making a difference in cities around the country.

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FACILITATORS, TRAINERS AND APPRENTICES

Spotlight on Philadelphia BEST

Nature of position: Primarily part-time opportunities to serve as BEST facilitators, trainers and, potentially, apprentices

Main funding source:
Private foundation grants and a mix of local public and private funds

For more information on the National BEST Initiative contact:
Elaine Johnson, Director of the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work at the Academy for Educational Development, ejohnson@aed.org

For more information on Philadelphia BEST contact:
Jennifer Levy, Philadelphia BEST Coordinator, at the Children, Youth and Families Council Education Consortium, jlevy21@hotmail.com
Ellen Tichenor, Director of Youth Development for the Greater Philadelphia Federation of Settlements, etich@aol.com
Dr. Cheryl Oakman, Director for the Center for Youth Development, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, cheryl@uwsepa.org

"Before BEST," explains Elaine Johnson, Director of the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work at the Academy of Educational Development, "many sites had trainers coming into their programs as 'the experts.' These outside trainers had no idea what youth workers do. They had no clue about the realities programs were facing—for example, they couldn't understand that it is a common occurrence for a youth to arrive at a program with four younger siblings in tow—BEST has changed all that. We know now that the most effective trainers are, or once were, youth work practitioners themselves."

In 1996, as an outgrowth of the success of their Advancing Youth Development curriculum, the Academy for Educational Development created a national initiative called BEST (Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers) with funding from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds. BEST awards funding to fifteen cities to help them build their local capacity for training youth workers. BEST is also designed to help communities promote and develop "youth work" as a profession. One of the most fruitful outcomes of BEST has been the creation of career opportunities within the infrastructure of BEST itself.

"There is a gap between what happens on the ground and where we want to go with respect to quality. To help close that gap it is absolutely critical that we build the skills of our staff as well as expand our pool of trainers. I think BEST will continue to be an effective vehicle for doing that."
– Ellen Tichenor, Director for Youth Development, Greater Philadelphia Federation of Settlements

Philadelphia, one BEST-funded site, has maximized the career opportunities inherent in BEST by creating strategic alliances with other initiatives and organizations.

To launch youth workers on their career path, Dr. Cheryl Oakman explains, "BEST has created a partnership with Community College of Philadelphia so youth workers can apply their AYD training towards a Youth Worker Certificate. This certificate can then be applied towards an Associates Degree. We've even made incentive grants and scholarships available to help youth workers pursue this certificate."

As a sequel to their introductory BEST courses, qualified youth workers in Philadelphia are given the opportunity to take a "Train the Trainers" course. Completion of this course and successful completion of the trainer certification process qualifies participants as BEST facilitators. Some BEST facilitators are now employed full-time as Youth Development Specialists by the United Way's Center for Youth Development, providing technical assistance to over 180 sites in the Philadelphia area.

Recently, Philadelphia has sought funding through the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Program to allow youth workers paid opportunities to gain their Youth Worker Certificate.

Other BEST sites:
Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Hampton, VA; Jacksoville, FL; Kansas City, MO; Milwaukee, WI; New Haven, CT; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Pinellas County, FL; Portland, OR; St. Paul, MN; San Francisco, CA; Springfield, MA; Washington, D.C.

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AFTER-SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY TEACHERS

New York City

Nature of position: Full-time, year-round
Main funding source:
U.S. Department of Education Community Technology Centers Grant
For more information contact:
Judith Beville, Director of School Age Programs and Community Technology Centers, Judithb@childrensaidsociety.org

Technology. It has become as integral to our daily lives as eating breakfast or carrying in the mail. Placing a high value on technology is nothing new to the Children's Aid Society, which operates over a dozen after-school programs and Community Technology Centers throughout New York City. According to Judith Beville, the School Age Program Director, "technology skills are as essential to a basic education as learning to read, write or do arithmetic." As evidence of this strong belief, beginning in 1999, the Children's Aid Society created Technology Teacher positions at five of their after-school sites.

"It's important to understand that the Technology Teacher position was never viewed as 'let's recruit some computer whiz to act as an outside specialist,'" explains Beville. "Technology Teachers have always been key members of our after-school teams."

In fact, nearly all of the Children's Aid Society's Technology Teachers started out as regular after-school teachers. "One of our Technology Teachers started out as a school custodian," recalls Beville. "He had this strong interest in computer technology and what it could do for kids. He gradually became one of our after-school teachers, and eventually, our Technology Teacher. He was recently nominated for an Excellence Award, a prestigious recognition given by the CEO's office." Other Technology Teachers have also come from the practitioner ranks, including those holding such dual roles as a morning Early Childhood Teacher and an afternoon After-School Teacher.

"Technology skills are as essential to a basic education as learning to read, write or do arithmetic."
– Judith Beville, Director of School-Age Programs and Community Technology Centers

Through creative links with schools and the Children's Aid Society's own Community Technology Centers, three of these Technology Teachers are now full-time. Explains Beville, "They teach basic computer skills to adults from the community in the morning. They offer classes to after-school and regular education teachers in the evenings. And, during the afternoons they teach children in the program some of the most sophisticated technology skills out there. Robotics. Animation. PowerPoint. You name it!"

Beville's success with the Technology Teacher positions has fueled her power for creative thinking when it comes to building career opportunities for after-school staff. Earlier this year, the Children's Aid Society began seeking funding for another new full-time position entitled Education Enrichment and Literacy Coordinator. Beville believes that this new in-school/out-of-school time liaison position is "critical to helping ensure that our programs can translate regular school curriculum goals into appropriate after-school learning activities."

Of equal importance, this new position would enable after-school and regular school staff to communicate more effectively around the needs of individual children and youth. Explains Beville, "The Education Enrichment and Literacy Coordinator will be that one central person whose job it is to ensure that those kids that are struggling get the resources and support they need to succeed academically and socially."

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YOUTH ADVOCATES

Salt Lake City, Utah

Nature of position: Full-time (9 months)
Main funding sources:
21st Century Community Learning Center and state funds administered through the Office of Child Care, Department of Workforce Services
For more information contact:
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All kids need a caring adult in their lives. The need is even greater for young adolescents who, more than any other age group, may require a stable adult relationship during the often turbulent middle school years. To address this need, the Salt Lake City School District has implemented a unique role, Youth Advocate, in all five middle schools. Youth Advocates work both during and after school to provide positive, individual attention to students who might otherwise fall through the cracks. "Without this attention," explains one Advocate, "students may fall into negative peer groups, irresponsible activities, and destructive habits—places where they can get attention, albeit negative."

So how do Youth Advocates help students?

The primary approach used by Youth Advocates is to provide one-on-one mentoring and support for referred students. "Often this starts out with Advocates sitting down with students to find out: Who do they hang out with? What are their strengths? What are their interests?" explains Colleen Croudy, Youth Development Specialist and Coordinator of Youth Advocates for the Salt Lake City School District.

Next, the Advocate, the youth, and the youth's parent/guardian work together to construct an Individualized Plan, which is connected to the student's regular school Student Education and Occupation Plan (SEOP). The Advocate then sees to it that youth becomes more positively integrated into his/her regular and after-school environments. This might be accomplished by helping them join clubs, engage in life skills training, participate in arts and other enrichment activities, or by getting involved in school-to-work experiences. Advocates also ensure that youth receive the counseling, health services or tutoring that they may need in order to be successful.

"Advocates are trustworthy adults who have helped out students through difficult times, connecting them with services they need to ensure a positive middle school experience."
– Salt Lake City School administrator

One key ingredient to the success of the Youth Advocate position is the high level of cooperation that has been established at many levels. Advocates are key members of both school and after-school staff teams. They coordinate regularly with parents, teachers, principals, after-school staff and outside agencies. While they do not provide counseling directly, Advocates work very closely with and under the direction of School Counselors. "In many schools," explains Ann Sasich, Administrator for Community Education, "School Counselors have come to utilize Advocates to support their role and even share office space."

This constant communication flow enables Advocates to assess students' ongoing needs, set goals, and monitor progress as well as help students develop meaningful connections between day and after-school programming.

"Advocates also lead social skills groups for kids—how to deal with anger, become a team member, or build relationships with peers. Some of our Advocates do a whole curriculum around bully-proofing," reports Croudy.

The Youth Advocates' work has made, and continues to make a difference for students. Meeting and planning regularly with Youth Advocates helps students improve their attendance, behavior, and academic performance. Through the process of developing individualized plans connected to the Student Education and Occupation Plan, students are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Salt Lake City's Youth Advocate position has been so successful in making a difference for students that plans are already in the works to expand the role to 10 elementary, and all 4 high schools beginning Fall, 2001.

This profile was adapted from an article by Ann Sasich and Colleen Croudy entitled "Youth Advocates: Making a Difference for Kids" which appeared in the Winter 2000 issue of the Eccles/Annenberg "In Action" Newsletter.

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THE TRAINERS APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (TAP)

Seattle, Washington

Nature of position: Nine month, part-time, paid apprenticeship
Main funding source: Corporate contributions and private foundation grants
For more information contact:
Janet Frieling, Associate Director of School's Out Washington,
jfrieling@schoolsoutwashington.org

"The initial impetus for the Trainers Apprenticeship Program (TAP) was to expand the size and diversity of our trainers' pool," recalls Janet Frieling, Associate Director of School's Out Washington in Seattle. "We had several culturally-specific after-school programs— Somalian, Chinese, and Hispanic—that we were trying to support. It was a real challenge for us to find trainers that could really meet their unique needs. We thought TAP would be one strategy for helping us be more effective in bringing about program improvements. What we discovered along the way was that TAP was also a powerful staff retention tool."

How does TAP work?

The School's Out Training apprenticeship Program (TAP), now in its 3rd year, matches practitioners and Site Coordinators of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds with seasoned trainers. During a 9-month period, trainer apprentices receive 40 hours of intensive mentoring, coaching, guided training and site work, along with direct instruction in adult learning and quality standards. Apprentices are paid for their participation. One of the hallmarks of the TAP program is how it provides a highly individualized professional growth experience for its participants. One of the tools used to do this is the TAP Career Action Plan that is developed jointly by each apprentice and their mentor. The plan lays out how they will build on the apprentices' existing strengths, while developing the skills and experiences they will need to become trainers and effective agents of change when working with site staff on program improvements.

> ***"TAP has given our participants a way to share their tremendous knowledge and expertise with others. It has helped them see themselves as leaders."***
> – Janet Frieling, Associate Director, School's Out Washington.

"We knew we had all these really talented people out there—but they didn't see themselves as being able to take that leap into being trainers. TAP has given them a way to 'test the waters' and discover their potential."

The Power of TAP

While most TAP graduates remain at their jobs, their apprenticeship experience allows them to expand their professional lives and salaries. Most TAP graduates become School's Out trainers and On-Site Technical Advisors, helping anywhere from one to half a dozen sites per year. Others go on to become approved STARS trainers, as part of Washington's state-funded career development initiative, conducting workshops that are now required for lead teachers and directors. Still others focus much of their new talents on improvement work at their own site, perhaps taking on occasional consulting projects such as curriculum design work.

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Resources *(cont. from back page)*

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST)
NIOST provides leadership for several national projects, including MOST (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time). Each of the MOST cities (Boston, Chicago and Seattle) have experimented with innovative efforts to support staff in career development and compensation.

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Publications available through NIOST include:

Credentialing in Out-of-School Time Programs. G. Morgan. 1998.

Building a Professional Development System that Works for the Field of Out-of-school Time. J. Costley. 1998.

New Perspectives on Compensation Strategies for School-age Programs. A paper by Gwen Morgan, Anne Mitchell and Brooke Harvey, to be published by the National Institute on Out- of-School Time, July, 2001.

On the Road to SAC Professionalism: Emerging Models, Trends, and Issues in Credentialing: A Working Paper. E. Nilsen. 1999.

Proceedings of a National Youth Policy Forum: the Realities of Staffing and Financing. To be released by NIOST, September, 2001.

Professional Development Systems: The State of the States. E. Gannett, J. Nee, D. Smith. School Age Review, pg. 26-31. Spring 2001.

Status of SAC Credentialing. E. Gannett. 2000.

For more information, see NIOST's web-site:
www.niost.org

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Resources

Currently, a broad range of local, state and national efforts are underway to advance the skills and professional status of school-age staff and youth workers. These varied initiatives, many of which are still in the pilot phase, include credentialing, career development ladders, compensation initiatives, and large-scale professional development projects. The following represents just a few examples of such initiatives.

Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW)
CCW is involved in a wide range of activities designed to improve wages, working conditions and the professional status of child care staff members. Recently, CCW released "Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs: Model Work Standards." This guide is available through their website: www.ccw.org or can be ordered by calling 1-800-UR-WORTHY.

U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Programs
The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration is offering competitive grants in support of apprenticeship programs designed to build staff skills and improve retention. For more information on The Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program, see the D.O.L. website at: http://wdsc.doleta.gov/sga/sga.asp

U.S. Military Staff Development and Compensation Initiative
The U.S. Military has developed a career ladder and compensation initiative to improve staff development and retention. A full description of this initiative, which includes opportunities for credentialing, can be found in an article entitled "Be all that you can be: Lessons from the Military for improving our nations child care system" (April 2000) by Applebaum, J. Campbell, C. Duff, N. Martin E., Martinson, K. Available through the National Women's Law Center web-site: www.NWLC.org

Washington State Career and Wage Ladder Pilot Project
Washington State's Department of Social and Health Services has developed a career and wage ladder project in order to maximize the potential for building staff skills and promoting staff retention. The key aspect of this project is that the state reimburses childcare and youth workers $.50 per hour for each educational increment that they have beyond the minimum required by licensing standards. Total reimbursement across the state came to $3.3 million in 2000. For more information, contact Denise Halloran, Program Manager at: 360-902-8042.

Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives
The Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives *(formerly the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education)*, conducts field-based research and promotes state-wide efforts related to the leadership and career development of early child care and education staff. The Institute offers a wide range of research reports, articles, videos, and tool-kits related to this topic as well as a list-serv dedicated to career development trends and issues (ECCAREER-L). Recently, the Institute distributed a national survey to gather information on early childhood and school-age career development efforts. Preliminary findings are available on their web site (http://institute.wheelock.edu), which will also feature updated survey findings throughout 2001. For more information contact Kim Elliott at: kimelliott@wheelock.edu

(Cont. on preceding page)

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June 2001

SPECIAL ISSUE: Focus on Staffing

After School Issues

From Contrast to Concrete

Issues in Building a Skilled and Stable Out-of-School Time Workforce

In many ways, the field of out-of-school time (OST) in the year 2001 is a study in contrasts. On the one hand, there is unprecedented opportunity for individual programs and the field as a whole to begin building a skilled and stable workforce. Training opportunities are increasing and the emerging field has developed a system of accreditation, credentials, and other higher education opportunities. Yet much of this potential momentum is blocked in a climate of high staff turnover, increased demands for quality, and a lack of consensus as to the field's identity (Gannett, Nee, & Smith, 2001). The strong economy of the last several years has made matters worse, and a slowing economy will present new and serious challenges around the funding of professional development initiatives.

In another area of contrast, the field needs to take a "long view" in addressing its problems, but staffing and other immediate program concerns require vast amounts of attention and force a shortsightedness. In addition, the field needs to unify around common language, policies and practices, but it is clear that there is no one "fix" to any problem facing the field, and a diversity of approaches is needed (Gannett et al., 2001). Similarly, an enormous strength of the OST field is its unique identify as a provider of invaluable services to children of a certain age range at particular times of the day. Yet collaborations with allied professions will contribute much to this emerging field and will need to be pursued. Further, other fields to which we have typically had very little exposure, such as labor force economics, may provide innovative solutions to our problems.

At the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST), we believe these contrasts are a sign of the times - a time of opportunity.

Produced by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time
Written by Anne Noonan Ph.D, Research Scientist, Center for Research on Women
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About NIOST

For over 20 years, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College, has successfully brought national attention to the importance of children's out-of-school time, influenced policy, increased standards and professional recognition, and spearheaded community action aimed at improving the availability, quality and viability of programs serving children and youth. NIOST's varied initiatives have moved the field forward using three paths: Research, Evaluation and Consultation; Policy Development and Public Awareness; & Training and Curriculum Development.

NIOST is part of the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College. The Wellesley Center for Research on Women and the Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies are united in a joint mission to educate, inform and expand our knowledge of women's lives. It is home to an interdisciplinary community of scholars, and theorists engaged in action, research, theory building, publication and training.

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growth, and challenge. This "issue paper" provides a general overview of the major issues involved in building a skilled and stable workforce in the field. It begins with a brief discussion of the elements of professional development systems created by allied professions and being embarked upon by our own. It then reports the findings of NIOST's semi-structured interviews with 19 "Key Informants" from a variety of arenas within the field of OST. It concludes with recommendations from the field of economics on dealing with the critical issue of staff compensation.

The Pieces of a Professional Development System

The field of Out-of-School Time has begun the work of developing an agreed-upon professional development system, following on the heels of similar efforts in the Early Childhood Education field. While formal professional development systems are multi-faceted, their central goal is to support people who wish to "make a career" out of the work (Costley, 1998).

Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives suggests five distinct elements of a professional development system:

1. **A core knowledge base** What do staff need to know in order to work effectively with school-age youth and have a positive impact on them?
2. **A career lattice or matrix** that links roles, qualifications, and compensation. What experience and training do staff need to move into a different role in the field?
3. **A system of training** that meets the needs of staff at all levels of work.
4. **A training approval system** whereby the field sets standards on the content, conduct, and quality of training.
5. **A registry of practitioners** that documents all relevant training and education completed by members of the field (Costley, 1998; Gannett, et al, 2001).

Reflections on Pieces of the System

Among the NIOST Key Informants and in the field overall, there is much philosophical agreement on the need to professionalize the field, standardize staff qualifications, and provide much more support for career mobility. Yet there is less agreement on exactly what should be required of a diverse workforce located in a variety of settings and program types. How much college work should be required and for what levels of employees? How much training should be required, on what schedule, and for whom? What are the appropriate roles of certification, apprenticeship, and other models of professional development?

There is also concurrence that the field needs a shared knowledge base unique to the school-age population, sometimes referred to as core competencies.

Core areas described as especially important by Key Informants included:

- Knowledge of child and youth development
- Familiarity with health and safety issues

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- Knowledge of program development
- Cultural/community competency.

Additional areas have been outlined in the NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care (Roman, 1998).

With regard to a career lattice or matrix, many Key Informants agreed that there was a link – or at least should be a link — between qualifications and compensation, yet the link is not evident in all programs or for all levels of staff. There was recognition that the field cannot raise the bar on staff qualifications without also increasing compensation, but there was also anxiety that increasing qualifications and compensation may be too expensive for staff and for programs. A related issue raised was that compensation cannot be linked to just one qualification such as education. Rather, compensation should be driven by more of a "portfolio" approach which factors in experience, training, and merit in addition to education.

"Good Part-Time" & "Bad Part-Time"

The part-time nature of much work in the OST field is frequently mentioned as a specific cause of staff turnover and a more general barrier to building a skilled and stable workforce. Yet there is increasing recognition of both "good part-time" and "bad part-time" arrangements in the field. There is clearly some room for part-time work, especially in programs with stable infrastructures and full-time leadership. Many OST staff, for example, college students and enrichment specialists, truly prefer part-time work and can bring special energy to programs at lower cost than full-time staff.

Some of the NIOST Key Informants felt that part-time work belied the complexity of working with school-age children and the importance in young people's lives of stable and consistent relationships with adults.

On the negative side, some of the NIOST Key Informants felt that part-time work belied the complexity of working with school-age children and the importance in young people's lives of stable and consistent relationships with adults. For staff who need full-time work and associated benefits, the realities of part-time work can be a major struggle. There is also a price to pay in the public eye, where part-time work is sometimes perceived as less important. One solution to the part-time problem is to create full-time options by "packaging" or "patchworking" together two or more part-time positions. Staff can work within the same agency, in schools, or elsewhere in community, for example, in child development centers, youth programs, or programs with a more traditional social work or child welfare focus, allowing for a more invested role in children and their families. Creative arrangement of hours is another possibility; before-school and after-school shifts can combine to become full-time positions. Another option is to make part-time jobs more attractive: providing benefits for fewer hours of work; building in more professional development time; offering connections to college courses and other resources in higher education; and facilitating the purchasing of benefits as a group.

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Coming Together "Across the Boundaries"

As it begins the work of creating a skilled and stable workforce, the OST field will need to determine what makes it unique among — and what it has in common with — various professional groups that have been separated historically. How do we connect to and draw from allied professions while preserving our own identity and autonomy? Some NIOST Key Informants suggested that connections with schools and cultural institutions will become increasingly important as school-age care becomes a critical part of a longer integrated day and less of an add-on component. Similarly, connections with the field of Early Childhood Education will allow the field to tap into vast experience with professional development and with involving parents, policymakers, and the public as advocates in professionalization efforts. With regard to the Youth Development field, there are many commonalties, with both fields needing to educate the public about their work and worth, and both fields being involved in similar professional development activities. Moreover, as both fields evolve, they are in many cases serving the very same children (Esposito, 1997). Finally, many of the human service professions across the lifespan – child care, special education, child welfare, youth work, adult reported services, elder care — provide models from which to draw. The Key Informants voiced that there is enormous potential to share expertise and resources.

Some NIOST Key Informants suggested that connections with schools and cultural institutions will become increasingly important as school-age care becomes a critical part of a longer integrated day and less of an add-on component.

There was also much sentiment that higher education is an invaluable partner in professionalizing the OST field, especially with regard to developing or refining relevant course work, creating OST concentrations, and establishing credentials. A comprehensive review of higher education's current involvement would be especially helpful at this stage in the field's development.

Coming Together from Within

Another important issue facing the field is how best to organize and unify itself. Amid a basic philosophical agreement that the field must unify before it is able to move forward, there is a sense that "the union model" or unionizing "across the board" is not the best response for the field at this time. Some Key Informants did feel that unions' track records in other fields (education, health care, military) could be helpful with regard to overall retention and stability, salary negotiations, benefits, improving workplace conditions, and linking training and education to compensation. However, the union model appears less useful in this field due to our diverse funding streams and an overall spirit of collaboration and cooperation between management and line staff. There were additional concerns about cumbersome policies and possible divisiveness.

There was much agreement, however, regarding the need for and value of professional organizations and associations. Such associations can help to build

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partnerships and provide forums for people to talk about the work and feel more connected to it. Associations can also play a valuable role in linking people to training and other professional development opportunities and developing a stronger national presence.

Improving the Public Image

As the OST field develops itself as a profession, it must attend to the issue of public perception. There is a great need to enhance credibility with allied professions, local and more distal policymakers, the general public, parents, and even staff within programs. To a certain extent, the field's embrace of higher standards and qualifications, especially with regard to staff education levels, will improve the public's perception. Other more targeted efforts are also needed. For example, the newly formed Afterschool Alliance is accepting this mission and is creating national recognition days and public image campaigns.

Some Key Informants offered up the Early Childhood Education field as an excellent example of a profession crafting and refining its public image. Through dissemination of research findings and through other avenues, the ECE field has convinced the larger society that its work matters and benefits children cognitively, socially, and physically. In similar fashion, the OST field needs to promote how it benefits school-age children in a variety of ways.

The Economists' View on Building a Skilled and Stable Workforce

As we work among ourselves and "across the boundaries" to address our workforce issues, the field of economics — although unfamiliar to many of us — provides an especially valuable perspective. The Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives has prepared a paper which seeks to add the voice of economists to the dialogue on OST compensation issues (Mitchell, Morgan & Harvey, 2001). Several main points of the paper are described here briefly and are offered as a springboard for further discussion.

First, while the OST field frequently focuses on the "supply" of programs, a more appropriate focus is on creating more effective "demand" for high-quality school-age care. From this perspective, parents as consumers need more detailed information about program quality (e.g., from Child Care Resource and Referral agencies), need to push for higher quality programs, and need to be able to pay for them (e.g., via more subsidies and tax credit programs).

Second, staff in the OST field experience a "negative return on investment," in that the amount they spend on higher education is usually higher than any associated increase in earnings. Scholarship and education loan forgiveness programs can eliminate this negative return.

Third, the field currently relies on an "elastic" supply of low-paid workers with relatively low skills who lack a long-term commitment to the field. Training

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programs that put entry-level workers onto a career path can stabilize the workforce.

Fourth, community organizing, via unions and other organizations, can effectively lobby legislators and policymakers around issues of compensation.

Finally, there is currently very little public or private-sector support for school-age care, and the "amount invested per child" needs to be increased.

Towards the Concrete

This NIOST "issue paper" has outlined the major issues facing our emerging field as we build a skilled and stable workforce. Each of the issues presented here – the need to enhance credibility, to agree upon what our professional development system will look like, to enable people to make careers out of the work, and to ally with others while remaining true to ourselves – suggests an important next step forward. These next steps are best constructed on a foundation of solid information about who we are and where we hope to go, through, for example, a survey of the OST labor force, programs, and other pieces of the infrastructure, such as higher education.

More information is clearly needed from staff at all levels: who are they; what are their skills and credentials; how are they compensated for their work; how is their day-to-day work experienced and organized; and what do they need to develop professionally, stay in the field, and make a career out of the work? Data is also needed from programs: what's out there; who and what supports them; what are their compensation policies and practices; how do they recruit and retain workers and how can they improve; what do they do best; and where do they need the most improvement? Finally, more information is needed about the infrastructure in which the field operates: local communities and agencies; higher education; state, regional, and national governments; and national organizations and associations.

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November 2001

Focus on Partnerships

After School Issues

Finding Common Ground

School and Out-of-School Time Program Partnerships

In the past several years, schools and out-of-school time providers across the country have increased their focus on the value of connections and partnerships between school districts or individual school sites and after-school programs. In many cases, these collaborations result in increased support for children's academic, social, physical, and emotional development.

What partnerships look like. Relationships between school and out-of-school time programs fall along a continuum ranging from schools leasing space to community-based child care and youth programs in their city to a joint commitment by schools and programs to align their educational goals and standards.

Schools and programs in partnership have a distinct but critical role to play in children's learning and development. The donation of space, resources and sometimes transportation by schools benefits children in out-of-school time programs. In turn, programs help to complement the school day by supplementing children's learning. Intentional efforts to meet and communicate about the ways in which both schools and programs can contribute to children's academic, social, and emotional development can create a "seamless day" for the kids they serve.

> *"Before our partnership, at 3:20,* [school] *kids turned into* [program] *kids but this year they are all our kids all day long"*
> –Seattle School Principal

Connections can be made through formal and informal communication and through one-time activities or ongoing, systematized partnerships. They can range from a call to a school principal from a program supervisor at a community-based program to discuss the progress of a particular child who is struggling, to a weekly meeting between program staff and school staff or even the program operating in the school's gym.

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The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author.

The Cross-Cities Network for Leaders of Citywide After-School Initiatives

The Cross-Cities Network is composed of 25 leaders of citywide after-school initiatives in major cities across the United States. The Network brings leaders together on a regular basis to explore common issues and develop personal relationships to sustain their work. The project is staffed by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In addition to bi-annual meetings, NIOST provides staff support for the following Network activities: weekly email updates from members; topical briefs on requested issues; research reports; and a database of initiative members.

For further information, please contact NIOST at 781-283-2547

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or visit

our web site at www.niost.org

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Finding Common Ground (cont. from p. 2)

Reasons why partnerships are valued now. Interviewees cited many reasons for the increased focus on school/out-of-school time partnerships. Some credit the greater emphasis placed on partnerships through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants. Others cite the focus on test scores and reaching academic standards among many school districts in the country, and the fact that after school programs are increasingly viewed as places for students to receive additional support to meet academic goals.

"I think that partnerships are here to stay because there's a growing recognition that both schools and nonprofit organizations have much to gain by coming together. One sector of the community alone isn't going to provide all that is needed by children and youth during their after school hours

– Ellen Gannett, National Institute on Out-of-School Time

In addition, out-of-school time programs are valued by political leaders for giving kids a safe place to be after school and contributing to reduced juvenile crime rates, which peak between 3 and 6 p.m. in many cities. Perhaps most importantly, out-of-school time programs assist working families with child-care needs for their younger children and enrichment opportunities for older children and youth.

Schools and out-of-school-time programs share common goals. Whatever the impetus, as communication between schools and out-of-school time programs grows, both parties are learning they share a common goal: to support children's academic, social, and emotional development. Schools and parents are learning that out-of-school time programs offer opportunities for kids to reinforce classroom material through experiential learning as well as to learn new skills, nurture their talents, get support from peers and adults, and to increase social skills. In addition, out-of-school time programs often offer activities that have been reduced or eliminated by schools such as art, drama, physical education, music and dance.

At the same time, providers find that the children they serve are benefited when out-of-school time staff are viewed by school staff and parents as part of a team that contributes to the development of the whole child.

Schools and programs can accomplish more working together. Partnerships and communication can enable schools and program providers to leverage more resources and serve more students than ever before. In addition, the two groups working together often come up with innovative ideas. Ron Morris of the Dallas Independent School District told us, "when schools work with community-based organizations, the result is a program that neither entity could create alone. You get more creative programs, and ideas are shared that schools or community-based organizations may not have had on their own, and we're able to serve more students than we originally expected."

As connections develop, roles must be clarified. One commonly voiced piece of advice was to clarify the roles of schools and the roles of programs when making connections between school and out-of-school time programs. True partnerships are more likely when both groups value the unique contributions each offers to children's development.

The recent national push for demonstrable academic success and higher test scores has created a climate where schools are under more pressure than ever to prove their effectiveness. In some cases, this means schools have less time

(cont. on p. 4)

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2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative and Expanding Youth Horizons

Boston, Massachusetts

The Program

In 1998, Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino created the 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative to support and expand Boston's network of high quality out-of-school time programs that provide academic and social growth opportunities for the city's school children.

The initiative brings together educators, municipal agencies, parents, after-school program providers, the cultural and business communities and private foundations to support children during their out of school time.

The prospect of increasing children's academic performance through after-school enrichment was a major impetus for launching the 2:00-to-6:00 Initiative. By 2003, every Boston student will have to pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test in English and mathematics to graduate from high school. Recent test scores indicate over half of Boston's public school students scored below grade level in reading and mathematics, making it unlikely they would meet MCAS standards. Quality out-of-school time supports can assist children in their efforts to successfully meet the benchmarks and the City of Boston has prioritized this issue.

Linking In and Out-of-School Time

The 2:00-to-6:00 Initiative is successfully facilitating partnerships between Boston Public Schools and after-school programs. Community-based after-school organizations may use school buildings rent-free after school, and schools and providers have begun to work together to help children develop academically and emotionally.

One component of the 2:00-to-6:00 Initiative's work is to provide resources for and facilitate partnerships with Boston's 250-plus after-school programs, encouraging the use of promising practices for learning. In 1999, the 2:00-to-6:00 Initiative partnered with The Children's Museum, Boston and other after-school providers to start Expanding Youth Horizons (EYH). EYH supports after-school programs in their efforts to integrate fun, creative and high quality learning activities into their curricula.

EYH was launched at a conference bringing together 300 members of the Boston after-school community. Conference participants received a Resource Notebook that explained the Boston Public Schools learning standards and suggested developmentally appropriate learning activities for a wide range of age groups. The notebook was created under the leadership of a Boston public school teacher. Responding to provider requests, EYH has also published a Training and Technical Assistance Catalog for after-school providers seeking to build their capacity to nurture learning.

Currently, a diverse group of after-school providers, educators, and representatives of cultural institutions are working under the EYH umbrella to create a common language about children's learning for in and out-of-school time staff and other stakeholders; define the unique role of after-school programs in supporting children's academic and social development; foster communication among school and after-school program staff; and develop systemic ways to ensure that programs and children access increased resources to improve learning activities during out of school time.

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Finding Common Ground (cont. from p. 2)

to focus on children's social, creative, and emotional development.

At the same time, many out-of-school time programs are not staffed by certified teachers, and are not structured in ways that promote formal instruction in reading and math. For this reason, and the value they place on emotional and social development, most programs are not comfortable being held accountable for children's grades or test scores.

Some experts prefer a model where the school's role is seen as primarily academic and instructional and the out-of-school time program's focus is on social skills, emotional development, creativity, play and experiential learning.

Out-of-school time programs support learning in unique ways. While there is some controversy over how much responsibility out-of-school time programs should take for children's academic achievement, there is growing recognition that when children's emotional and developmental needs are met, they are more likely to perform well academically. Out-of-school time programs and schools can align their programs in ways that support children academically and developmentally.

With the stronger focus on academics, school-sponsored hands-on activities and field trips are becoming less frequent. Out-of-school time programs are uniquely equipped to provide these experiential learning opportunities. A cooking activity can become a lesson in math and science; a trip to a local park can provide an opportunity to observe birds or insects discussed in a biology lesson; and a field trip to a colonial village can support a history lesson.

At the same time, children acquire interpersonal skills and support in out-of-school time programs that may contribute to their academic success and keep them invested in the school community, especially if the out-of-school time program is located on school premises. According to John Leichty of the Los Angeles Unified School District, kids who stay connected to school, community and home during middle school have a significantly increased chance of being successful adults. Ron Morris of the Dallas Independent School District reports that he has seen decreased school absenteeism and discipline problems from kids who attend after school programs.

But an out-of-school time program does not have to be located on school premises to make connections with the school day. Boston's Expanding Youth Horizons (EYH) program collaborates with cultural institutions and Boston Public Schools to provide school-based and non-school based

(cont. next page)

"Out-of-school programs were originally created to provide supervision and recreation. Only recently, with high stakes testing, are schools looking at after-school programs as opportunities to provide extended learning. However, we can't lose sight of the importance of activities young people have a passion for. A skateboarder not doing well in school is going to continue to skateboard. If the school pushes the activity off the campus, the skateboarder will simply go somewhere else. Many students participating in this activity are marginalized students. Our after-school programs must begin to embrace these activities and provide portable skateboard parks and then leverage this activity and others back to academic assistance. The activities of after-school programs must keep young people connected to their school, home and community."

– John Leichty, Los Angeles Unified School District

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Finding Common Ground *(cont. from p. 4)*

child care providers information on ways to incorporate fun, experiential activities that support learning standards. EYH is currently exploring the creation of a web site to provide updated resources, curriculum tips, and a forum for educators and out-of-school time providers to communicate. This is especially valuable to busy people who may find it easier to log on to a web site at 8 p.m. rather than attend a meeting at noon.

In some cases, out-of-school time programs can have an impact in the larger community. Charlotte's Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST) program provides a three-hour training on quality out-of-school time that is open to every adult in the community who works with children. This includes scout leaders, soccer coaches, ballet teachers, mentors, counselors, teenagers who work in summer camps and many others.

Schools as a Community Resource: Dallas' 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Dallas, Texas

The Program

The Dallas Independent School District began the 2001-2002 school year with forty-five 21st Century Community Learning Centers providing after-school and community programs for over 10,000 students, parents and community members.

The 21st Century sites were started with two goals in mind: foster greater cooperation between schools and other after-school program providers, and link after-school activities more closely with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Curriculum (TEKS) used by schools.

In addition to progress in these areas, the Dallas Independent School District has seen a drop in absenteeism and behavior problems in students who participate in the after-school programs at 21st Century Learning Centers.

Linking In and Out-of-School Time

Texas state law mandates that schools themselves – not districts or central administrations – make decisions about enhancing student performance on their campuses. This includes the critical decision to set up and maintain a campus-based after school program. Each 21st Century school therefore works with community organizations to create its own unique after-school program.

Dallas schools invited community-based organizations to run after-school activities in school buildings at no cost for the space. Because of this partnership, after-school programs are able to serve more students than ever before by rotating children through different programs at the same site. At 3 p.m., one group may attend an after-school tutoring program, while another attends a YMCA after-school athletic program. At 4 p.m., the groups switch.

All of the Dallas 21st Century sites link after-school activities to TEKS. The most recent 21st Century Learning Grant applications included funding for out-of-school enrichment activities and materials aimed at boosting academic performance in school.

Two committees oversee each 21st Century Learning site. The Site Advisory Council (including teachers, out-of-school-time program staff, community organizations, parents and other community members) oversees and advises the after-school program on what the community wants for its kids. The School Support Team (made up of administrators, after-school site coordinators, school counselors, teachers, food service workers, transportation staff and custodial staff) informs and involves the community and assists with coordination of regular day and after-school programs. They also help link after-school activities to reading, mathematics and science, and coordinate use of facilities between school day staff and after-school staff.

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Strategies for Successful Connections

In interviews with both national and local experts on school and out-of-school time partnerships, all shared similar insights on building successful collaborations and partnerships:

1. Communication is key. Opening lines of communication between school and out of school-time program staff, as well as among other partners, is critical. By taking the time to understand each other's unique cultures, contributions and challenges, partners are better able to articulate roles and develop programs for alignment between school and out-of-school time. Partners are more motivated to communicate when time and money is allotted to support their efforts instead of simply adding additional task to large workloads.

2. Intermediary organizations can be a bridge. Organizations like Partners in Out-of-School Time in Charlotte, Boston's 2:00- to—6:00 Initiative and School's Out Washington can serve as facilitators and translators. Schools and out-of-school time programs have distinct cultures and approaches, and it is often valuable to get assistance with communication and understanding.

3. Work from shared goals. While establishing relationships and communication, partners should also talk about their vision for what young people need to succeed and should focus on shared or overlapping goals rather than differences.

4. Involve the community. The most successful partnerships involve not only school and out-of-school time program staff, but also parents; political, faith and community leaders; local and state governments; and funders. It is best to involve all players in the planning and relationship building phase. It is also important that collaborations and partnerships reflect the school and program community in terms of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

5. Leaders must buy in. Many people told us that partnerships struggle if the school principal and out-of-school time program director are not fully invested. Leaders model collaboration to the entire community.

6. Staff at all levels must support partnership. At the same time, it is also important that all school and program staff - from administrators, to janitors, to teachers to childcare providers – are aware of the partnership and support it.

7. Partnerships should be reciprocal. Children, youth, families and communities should all benefit from a partnership. Collaborations focused just on increasing children's academic performance for the benefit of schools or to provide programs with facilities can feel one-sided.

8. Put it in writing. It is important to put agreements about collaboration, communication and resource sharing in writing so that they survive transitions among leadership and other key staff and partnership participants.

9. Back up your efforts with sound research. In Boston, Charlotte, and other cities, solid research supporting the value of out-of-school time programs contributed to school and community buy-in and informed partnership planning.

(see p. 8 for more interviewee insights)

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Out-of-School-Time Program/School Linkages Project and Alignment Initiative

Seattle, Washington

The Program

In 1999, Seattle MOST (Making the MOST of Out-of-School Time) provided a grant for six school and out-of-school time provider teams to strengthen connections and partnerships between out-of-school time programs and schools. The grant was administered and supported through a partnership of School's Out Washington, The City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools.

The first year of the grant (1999-2000) was designated as a planning year for teams to assess needs in their program and school community, develop a plan to address those needs and increase cooperation between out-of-school-time programs and schools. The second year (2000 – 2001) was for implementation. The teams included school staff, program staff, parents and community members. Teams attended training and received technical assistance to enhance their team-building efforts.

For the 2001-2002 school year, Seattle Public Schools is engaged in an Alignment Initiative to strengthen relationships between programs and schools, in order to enhance children's learning and to increase children's social and emotional development. Programs and schools will be asked to work together to align out-of-school activities with schools' learning standards. Programs that demonstrate curriculum alignment will be offered rent-free space by the district.

Linking In and Out-of-School Time

Prior to the Out-of-School-Time Program/School Linkages project, it was common for school staff and program staff to have no or very little contact with each other, even though out-of-school time programs are often housed inside school buildings. The Linkages grant allowed school and program staff to get to know each other over an entire school year, build a strong team and plan collaborative strategies. Most participants in the Program/School Linkages project felt the connections they have made through this initiative will benefit their agencies and the children they serve, long beyond the two-year grant period.

Through the Linkages grant, schools and programs discovered many innovative ways to support and strengthen each other's work. Final plans included strategies such as:

- Institutionalizing systems of communication and coordination between schools and programs
- Developing a handbook and model for coordination between a school and a community center
- Developing consistent standards of behavior for children in school and out-of-school time programs
- Working together to present "family reading nights" for kids and parents
- Including program staff in school staff meetings and the school governance structure
- Hiring program staff to assist in classrooms during the school day
- Hiring a staff person to serve as a liaison between school and out-of-school time programs
- Including program staff in parent/teacher conferences.

Lessons learned from the Program/School Linkages effort are being currently being captured through a process evaluation to help inform and strengthen continued partnerships through the Alignment Initiative.

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Overcoming Challenges to Collaboration (cont. from p. 6)

Interviewees also shared some challenges they have experienced and strategies for overcoming those challenges.

1. Time is the biggest challenge.
Because school staff, program staff and parents are all incredibly busy and have different "shifts" with kids, finding time to meet together can be the biggest challenge to a partnership. However, when partners are committed and flexible, they can find time to meet.

2. Move forward despite cynicism.
Several cities have been able to address concerns about programmatic effectiveness by establishing pilot projects. Instead of convincing an entire school district or city that all schools and out-of-school time programs should partner, pilot partnerships are set up to test ideas and processes for partnership.

3. Administrative systems pose a challenge.
Schools and out-of-school time programs are often subject to different sets of standards and bureaucratic requirements. Many partnerships found that understanding each other's systems and goals and looking for ways to align or streamline requirements was extremely helpful.

Resources

Interviewees:

This article is based on one-on-one interviews with the following people, which took place in August and September 2001:

- Ellen Gannett, Co-Director and Director of Training, National Institute on Out-of-School Time, www.niost.org
- John Leichty, Assistant Superintendent of Extended Day Programs, Los Angeles Unified School District, 213-625-4009, jleichty@lausd.k12.ca.us
- Ron Morris, Specialist, Dallas Independent School District, 972-502-1249, rmorris@dallasisd.org
- Clare Tate, Director, Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST), 704-376-9541, post@fftc.org
- Marinell Yoders, former Senior Program Manager, Boston 2:00 –to-6:00 Initiative.. Contact Kathleen Traphagen, Executive Director, 617-635-2098

Additional Sources and Suggested Further Reading:

Ashley, Nancy and Malecka, Christina. (2000). *Process Evaluation Report: MOST Out-of-School Time Program/School Linkages.* Schools Out Washington, Seattle, WA. www.schoolsoutwashington.org

Blank, Martin J., Jehl, Jeanne, McCloud, Barbara. (2001). *Education and Community Building: Connecting Two Worlds.* Institute for Educational Leadership. Washington, DC. www.iel.org

The Children's Museum and The Boston 2:00 – 6:00 After School Initiative. *(2000). The Expanding Youth Horizons Initiative: Supporting Learning in Boston After School Programs.* Boston, MA. 617-635-2098

Joiner, Lottie. (2000). *Dawn to Dusk: School Districts Explore Extended Day Options,* American School Board Journal, December 2000

Miller, Beth. (2001). *The Promise of After School Programs.* Educational Leadership, Volume 58, Number 7, April 2001

Pardini, Priscilla. (2001). *Extended School Days.* The After School Administrator, August, 2001.

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Setting Standards

After School Issues

Citywide After-School Initiatives Share Their Experiences Developing and Implementing Standards

Most longstanding professions eventually develop some set of institutional or professional standards through which practice and procedure are scrutinized. Experts suggest that there are two hallmarks of a new field: a professional association and an agreed-upon set of standards for practice. The Standards for Quality School-Age Care of the National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) were first published in 1995. The Standards were designed to describe effective practices in out-of-school time care and to institute guidelines for policy and programs.

Some school-age care professionals suggest that the NSACA Standards are limited in scope because they were designed with only youth between the ages of five and 14 in mind, although programs serve children and youth of all ages. As a result, the Standards may serve more as a baseline for revision and adaptation. Examples and indicators of quality reflect the characteristics of the program and the population served. Citywide After-School initiatives have moved in different directions along the issue of standards. Their experiences are helpful in considering the choices and challenges associated with standards development and implementation.

Having a national set of standards available may or may not be useful to policy makers and program providers. Any promulgated national set of standards runs the risk of being too broad and difficult to actualize at the program level in addition to being developed without the input of front line staff or participants. Yet, established standards national or local can guide the allocation of funds, promote consistency, create goals for staffing and program development, and stimulate strategic planning. Standards may provide a lens through which program providers can look critically at program components.

One of the uses of the NSACA Standards has been as an avenue towards accreditation. However, accreditation is difficult to achieve and may not be appropriate for some programs. Recognizing the unique situations faced by each out-of-school program, NSACA promotes the Standards as a tool to guide continuous improvement, with or without accreditation as an end goal.

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The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author.

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The Cross-Cities Network is composed of 21 leaders of citywide after-school initiatives in major cities across the United States. The Network brings leaders together on a regular basis to explore common issues and develop personal relationships to sustain their work. The project is staffed by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In addition to biannual meetings, NIOST provides staff support for the following Network activities: weekly email updates from members; topical briefs on requested issues; research reports; and a database of initiative members.

For further information, please contact NIOST at 781-283-2547

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Motivation for Standards Development

Utilizing standards, national or local, can create a common language or dialogue across program types allowing all stakeholders to have a common understanding of quality. As a strategic tool, standards can help target needs, which then allows for an improvement agenda based on those needs. Assessment based on standards can also fill-in for missing quantitative data to show program effectiveness. A demonstration of program effectiveness is imperative to engagement of community collaborators, retention or expansion of funding, staff recruitment, increased public recognition, and enlarged program participation (Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, 2001).

Key Motivators for Standards Development

- Creating common language
- Developing a common understanding of quality
- Streamlining efforts for fundraising, training, and evaluation
- Increasing public recognition
- Demonstrating program effectiveness

In Denver over the last six months, a citywide committee has embarked upon the task of creating citywide standards and outcome goals. Motivating their work was a realization that there were many co-existing prototypes of after-school program providers in the city – with many similar needs, varied program standards, and all needing to raise dollars, etc. It became apparent that it would be in the best interests of the organizations and the children, if providers could focus effort on working more collaboratively, recalls Shirley Farnsworth of the Denver Public School-Community Education Office. "We asked ourselves two questions: What is our joint vision for Denver? and What would be the components of a quality program?" The answers to those questions led to a strong partnership between the Denver Mayor's Office and the Denver Public Schools Superintendent's Office and the formation of a citywide committee. The Denver citywide committee will be focusing its work on standards and outcomes over the next six months, and expect the full implementation of the project to take about two years.

It became apparent that it would be in the best interests of the organizations and the children, if providers could focus effort on working more collaboratively.

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Special Issues

Concept, Consensus, Commitment

In Columbus the Mayor's Office of Education crafted a collaborative relationship with the Board of Education, community leaders, the United Way, and local private corporations. A community forum brought together over 180 individuals with strong interest in youth and child development. Out of that forum and using the NSACA and National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Standards as a foundation, came the "Standards for Creating Successful Out-of-School Opportunities for Columbus Youth."

Hannah Dillard from the Mayor's Office of Education explains that "as an after-school community we would be all over the board if we didn't have the Columbus Standards as a focused strategy. We know in order to achieve the outcomes we desire we must stay focused on our six components of quality out-of-school time."

The process of moving from concept to commitment required several key steps according to Dillard. "One of the first tasks in developing the Columbus Standards was taking a scan of the environment and uncovering community needs, issues, etc. It was important that we suspended deliberation over possible areas of conflict between different sectors of the city in order to first get to consensus of what after-school should look like and what our needs were." After reaching consensus and agreeing on major issues, then the stakeholders could move through any murky waters of conflict. Dillard points out the importance of then identifying someone who would champion the cause. In Columbus, the Mayor emerged with a "willingness to talk the big picture and give vision to the mission."

Commitment to the standards needs to come from all stakeholders. One of the key components of standards development is to ensure that enough people and the right people are at the table. The overseeing entity, in this case the Mayor's Office, needed to demonstrate commitment to implementation along with program providers. "We provide support for implementing and evaluating the standards. There is an interim self-assessment from which programs can use to check progress and identify needs. We also send out an evaluator to the site. Between the self-assessment and the evaluator we can come to consensus as to where the program needs to go forward."

City of Columbus Standards For Creating Successful Out-of-School Opportunities For Columbus Youth

- Program Management
- Program Components
- Academic Assistance
- Enrichment Activities
- Prevention Units
- Recreation and Socialization
- Strong Family Involvement
- Nutritious Snack
- Program Performance Criteria

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Gaining Compliance

Once standards are in place there are new challenges in meeting those standards. Accountability requires significant investment in capacity building, assessment, and evaluation capacity. Without these support structures in place, standards lose their role as achievement benchmarks (Pitman, et.al, 2002). Thomas Hatch (2001), writing for the Carnegie Foundation, suggests that it takes capacity to build capacity. Writing about schools, he affirms that the implementation of improvement may be difficult because programs lack the capacity to change. His notion suggests that promoting the standards absent of providing capacity building assistance give little guarantee of success. Program providers may easily see the benefit of standards, but lack the resources to hire appropriate personnel, acquire needed materials, or dedicate requisite time to carry out change.

Standards for Baltimore After-School Opportunities in Youth Places

Organizational Standards

- Human Relationships
- Indoor Environment
- Outdoor Environment
- Safety, Health & Nutrition
- Administration

Program Standards

- Activities
- Program Areas

Core Standards for Philadelphia's Youth Programs

- Human Relations
- Program Planning
- Program Implementation
- Activities
- Program Administration
- Indoor Environment
- Outdoor Environment
- Safety, Health & Nutrition

In Baltimore, complying with the "Standards for Baltimore After-School Opportunities in Youth Places" also means receiving funds and technical assistance. Baltimore's approach to standards compliance has been to hold out the Baltimore Standards as a more fluid document. Rebkah Atnafou of the After-School Institute explains that "there is a three year commitment to implementation so programs can prioritize which standards to implement first.... which are most doable for an agency at a specified time. The only exception to the three-year implementation is safety standards."

This strategy may prove helpful to many after-school initiatives. Having a gradual and supportive implementation strategy keeps the focus on long-term change and quality development instead of quick improvements to satisfy crisis funding needs.

A similar strategy is employed in Philadelphia. The Core Standards of Philadelphia, based on a number of national youth advocacy organization standards, including NSACA, are divided into eight categories. Under the categories there are three levels of Standards: Minimum or Level 1 Standards which should be in place at the start of the program; First Year or Level 2 Standards which should be fully implemented by the end of the first year; and Continuous Improvement or Level 3 Standards which are tailored to the particular characteristics of the program and serve as longer-term quality goals. Paul DiLorenzo, Director of the Office of Children's Policy explains

(cont. on p.5)

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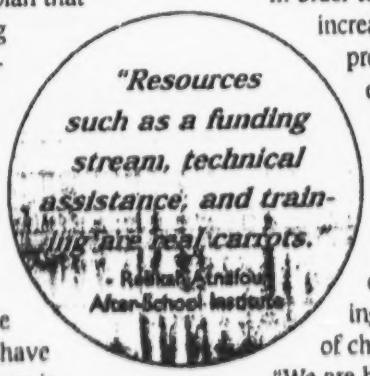
Gaining Compliance *(cont. from p. 4)*

that in choosing this accountability structure the city could be supportive to providers. "We didn't want to be just about quantity. We provide as much help as possible to reach quality. Progress on Level 2 and 3 Standards is done through developing a workplan that comes with training and technical assistance contracted through the United Way."

In Baltimore, according to Atnafou, after-school providers are thankful that they have the standards because it provides a framework to develop quality programs. "Resources such as a funding stream, technical assistance, and training are real carrots. The After-School Strategy Team continuously advocates for increased funding, so there is a clear benefit to programs complying with the After-School Strategy and embracing the standards." The Baltimore Standards are "research-based." Atnafou explains that this means "we are always in the process of reassessing the standards as more information and research becomes available. As we get more feedback from programs, new issues and concerns emerge."


"Resources such as a funding stream, technical assistance, and training are real carrots."
- Reuben Atnafou
After-School Institute

In order to promote increased utilization of programs it is essential, in program design, to always keep the end-users in mind. One area that Baltimore is currently evaluating is the inclusion of children's voices. "We are beginning to take steps to get youth more actively involved and grant them a say in the kinds of activities implemented in the programs. We have hired a youth engagement specialist to help us."

Key Elements for Gaining Compliance

- Funding Stream
- Technical Assistance
- Capacity Building Assistance
- Supportive Implementation
- Strategy
- Fluid Standards
- Input from End Users

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Alternative Strategies

The City of San Diego administers San Diego's "6 to 6" Extended School Day program that includes sub-contracting with community-based providers, disseminating funds, conducting the RFP process, and monitoring compliance with the sub-contracts. San Diego City Schools has always allowed community organizations to operate licensed after-school programs on campus. When the movement towards supporting a citywide strategy for after-school emerged, it was logical to pursue these experienced organizations.

The sub-contract specifies scope of services, period of performance, budget and expenditures, staffing requirements, program content, funding procedures, etc., to which all programs funded by the city must ascribe. While the operating agreement does not include specific quality statements as found in other standards documents, the city sub-contracts with community organizations that have demonstrated the capacity to provide high quality after-school care including YMCA San Diego County, Social Advocates for Youth, and Harmonium. Steven Amick, Program Administrator for San Diego "6 to 6" comments that, "if we were to impose a set of city-wide standards that supercede our sub-contractors' protocols, it would probably be met with some resistance." Each of the providers has their own set of documented standards that often extend beyond the expectations embedded in the contractual agreement. The providers have shown a historical ability to provide quality after-school care. "We have collected policy and procedure manuals from each of the program providers."

One of the reasons why San Diego's Standards strategy works is because the city has good cooperation among providers, which ensures a consistent level of quality. Amick explains that the city offers a forum through its staff development activities for providers to share effective practices. Program monitors visit sites at least twice a year to check whether the elements of the contract are being met and also to make some qualitative observations. However, providers also see themselves as having responsibility for program evaluation and improvement in addition to the City of San Diego.

Amick emphatically points out "the fact that San Diego does not impose an overarching set of standards separate from the requirements outlined in the Operating Agreement, does not water down the quality of programming. At the insistence of the providers themselves, the bar has actually been raised as the elements of the Operating Agreement are scrutinized against those standards historically held and implemented by the community providers."

"At the insistence of the providers themselves, the bar has actually been raised as the elements of the Operating Agreement are scrutinized against those standards historically held and implemented by the community providers."

- Steven Amick, Program Administrator, San Diego "6 to 6"

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Expanding Standards

Kansas City Youth Program Standards of Quality Performance, adapted from the NSACA Standards, were developed by 24 local youth-serving agencies working in collaboration with YouthNet of Greater Kansas City. These standards apply to youth programs serving children and youth ages five through ten years of age during non-school hours. After surveying 1,600 teens, the standards were reconfigured to address characteristics and needs of older youth and the organizations that serve them.

"We think of the organizational structure as three concentric circles with youth in the center, staff in the circle surrounding youth, and agency in the outermost circle."

- Laura Lyon, YouthNet

The Standards of Quality Performance for Teen Programs are formatted in a unique action-oriented framework. Standards are expressed under the themes of: (1) what youth do; (2) what staff do; and (3) what the agency does, instead of the more typical quality categories of school-age care standards.

Laura Lyon of YouthNet expounds that "we think of the organizational structure as three concentric circles with youth in the center, staff in the circle surrounding youth, and agency in the outermost circle. The focus is on youth and how we support them in youth programs. The concept is that with agency support, staff are better able to do their job and provide opportunities and support to youth. Youth, with this support from staff, are able to take leadership roles, have frequent interactions with caring adults and are free to take advantage of the developmental opportunities offered to them by staff." Teens in Kansas City are currently engaged in a process of further delineating specific examples of these standards in action.

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Resources

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NIOST
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References:

Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement. (2001). Use of Continuous Improvement and Evaluation in After-School Programs. Minneapolis, MN: Author.

Hatch, T. (2001). It takes capacity to build capacity. Education Week, 20 (22), 44,47.

Pittman, K., Tolman, J., Yohalem, N., Thomases, J., & Trammel, M. (2002). Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities. Takoma Park, MD: Forum for Youth Investment.

U.S. Department of Education. (2000). Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs. Washington, DC: Author.

Other Resources:

The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care, 1998
The National School Age Care Alliance
1137 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02124
(617) 298-5012
www.nsaca.org

After-School Programs & The K-8 Principal Standards for Quality School-Age Child Care, 1999
National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 386-2377,
(703) 684-3345
www.naesp.org

Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Association For the Education of Young Children, 1998
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 424-2460,
(202) 232-8777
www.naeyc.org

"Community Programs to Promote Youth Development"
National Academy Press
www.nap.edu
This report compiles research about the effectiveness of specific youth development programs or approaches. Researchers report that they found consistent, compelling evidence that specific factors in community programs have a positive impact on adolescent development. The report cites and explores the following elements in programs:

- Physical and psychological safety
- Appropriate structure
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities to belong
- Positive social norms
- Opportunities to "matter" or make a difference
- Opportunities for skill building
- Integration of family, school and community efforts

The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) is developing a tool for continuous improvement for education programs and schools serving vulnerable youth. The tool is based on the Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) system of continuous improvement, launched by NYEC in 1995.

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1836 Jefferson Place, NW
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May 2002

Focus on Connections

After School Issues

Connecting Schools and After-Schools within Citywide Initiatives

Part Two of "Finding Common Ground" (Vol. 2, Issue 1, November 2001)

While many activities occur similarly in both settings, schools and after-school programs offer unique strengths towards fulfilling developmental needs of children and youth. Beyond sharing space there are many ways that children and youth's school and after-school experiences may connect. Learning, staff, and leadership are examples of three domains where the worlds of school and after-school can potentially make powerful connections that mutually support learning and positive development goals for youth and children.

These connections between school and after-school allow more resources to be available to program participants, create greater leveraging power, and afford continuity. Schools are mandated to teach academic content and facilitate intellectual inquiry and development. After-school programs in particular have the flexibility to provide children and youth the opportunities to build relationships with caring adults, develop self-confidence and feelings of belonging, and participate in a broad range of enriching social, recreational, and artistic activity.

Connections may occur through mandate, intentional planning, or spontaneously. Linkage occurs at the school level, but can be activated and supported through the larger district or citywide system. Citywide leadership can build the capacity for linkage that best assures school/after-school partnerships have the tools and strategies at hand to realize connection. Seattle Public Schools, in collaboration with the Learning Partners Group, St. Louis Public Schools Community Education, and The After-School Corporation of New York offer strong examples of citywide supported school/after-school connections. An understanding of the challenges faced by these citywide initiatives and the processes undertaken to implement connections, can inform other organizations seeking to replicate success.

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Learning Connections

Clearly the activity of learning is not exclusive to the classroom. There are currently many definitions of learning that prevail in education literature. Despite lack of consensus on terminology—it remains that authentic learning takes place in settings outside the formal classroom. What we might wonder is how it relates to the learning that occurs in the classroom. And what are the potential benefits of intentionally linking the learning that occurs in the classroom with the learning that occurs in after-school programs?

Education reform and high stakes testing have placed new challenges and pressures on all involved in children and youth education including school administrators, teachers, out-of-school time providers, and families, to shore up the deficits in educational experiences and collectively organize more responsive, engaging, and effective education delivery systems. Shifting the learning focus in after-school from traditional after-school content and pedagogy to additional academic instruction does not seem to have much merit. Aldeman (1996) and others suggest that the decision to increase the quantity of time for strictly academic teaching and learning represents a hollow goal and can in fact have negative repercussions. Extending non-academic time at school has "important impacts on students, and students are willing to commit their free time to well-conceived and well-structured activities provided through their local schools." Some researchers point out that after-school time provides an opportunity for participatory, exploratory learning and mentoring that could easily decrease from children's educational experiences due to the high-stakes outcomes-based test and assessment atmosphere (Noam, Biancarosa, & Dechausay, 2002)

Students at Ditmas Educational Complex, Intermediate School 62 – Brooklyn, New York

The After-School Corporation (TASC) founded in 1998, serves approximately 32,000 children and youth at 109 sites. TASC awards grants to nonprofit organizations that establish partnerships with individual public schools and deliver academic, arts-related, recreational, and support services to after-school participants. Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, Inc. (CAMBA) operates three TASC sites, one being at the Ditmas Educational Complex, Intermediate School (IS) 62 in Brooklyn, New York. It is a basic tenant of TASC that the programs supported "build upon and enhance students' school-day experiences and support the Board of Education's performance standards and related benchmarks." Hence, a specifically stated goal of CAMBA and IS 62 is to build greater consistency and collaboration between the day school and the after-school.

Through the after-school program students can participate in club activities such as Drama, Computer, African Dance, Hip-Hop, Poetry, and Gym; and receive assistance in their academic subjects. For 200 students the day at school begins at 8:15 and lasts till 5:45. As much as educators debate about seamless transitions and learning connections, it's the students' experiences and perceptions that determine whether real continuity and connections take place.

During a recent focus group, students from IS 62 shared their thoughts about after-school. In regards to how they separate the experience of school and after-school—they don't. Students acknowledged differences between the two environments, but consider it one experience. One student said, "I feel like it's all school. We're still learning." They perceive the extension of day school into the after-school and vice versa. A student explained that, "our math teacher gives us extra homework for us to do [specifically] in after-school."

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Learning Connections (cont. from p. 2)

The students were explicit that learning was a focus of both school and after-school. Students talked about the process of learning fractions and how it related to the process of learning African Dance. "For both, first the teacher explains, then she gives an example...and then we try." Helping students understand the similarity of learning math and learning dance is the key connection that school and after-school teachers can make. Success is the mastery of the reasoning behind the activity, and the accurate execution. Asked whether they could see the value of both learning experiences, the students were quick to mention how they "must pass math." However, they were not too shy to disclose that learning dance is more fun, and important, also.

The learning connections at IS 62 go in both directions. One student recollected how a poem he had written during an after-school creative writing class became a subject of conversation/school assignment with his day school teacher. Another student recalled that rap poetry from the after-school poetry slam merged into a language arts exercise in day school class. We may speculate that one benefit of reciprocal connection between school and after-school is that successful learning experiences in one domain build confidence for learning experiences in the other domain. Individual student learning strengths may be located in one domain or the other—so both domains need to be supported. Support of both domains exposes unique avenues of connection where teachers (school and after-school) can engage students, i.e., incorporating interests in rap into a standard poetry class.

Additionally, the contextual learning method emblematic of after-school can reinforce difficult learning topics from the day school in a peer supported, more relaxing environment.

Principal Connections

From a principal's point of view the question may be: What resources can this collaboration bring to the table and how does this collaboration increase our capacity to meet education goals? There needs to be a well articulated strategy about why a district is undertaking a specific project and how it fits with its core mission (Pardini, 2001). Leadership buy-in is key to implementing school/after-school connections. Sarah Mello Temple of School's Out Washington explains that "what we hear from our providers is that the principal has to be in the loop. The key is that the principal has to have a philosophical understanding of the role and worth of after-school programs."

Based on evidence cited in Policy Studies Associates evaluation of the second year of TASC, principals who were engaged in their school's after-school project typically offered programming suggestions, made resources available, helped remove barriers and encouraged participation from all stakeholders. The principal offers the central coordination needed for after-school to integrate their activities with the substance of the school day or contribute to a concerted effort to enhance student's learning (Policy Studies Associates, 2001). Fred McIntosh of TASC agrees that the school principal plays a crucial role in promoting connection between school and after-school.

Sometimes, inadvertently, principal turnover may pave the way for school/after-school connections. A new principal coming in "sees a program already in place where kids are safe, healthy, looked out for,

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Principal Connections *(cont. from p. 3)*

etc., which helps to make him or her feel enthusiastic about the program. There's no task of having to sell the principal on the after-school idea."

In Seattle, principals have been mandated to write school transformation plans, which must include testimony of partnership with the community. For many principals the after-school program represents a logical partner to tout. In many cases this mandate has brought in the after-school provider to be a part of the transformation team and has laid the groundwork for the after-school provider to attend faculty meetings, attend site council, etc. As a result there are mutually promoted monthly meetings between school representatives and after-school providers.

Jean Anthony, Principal at the Bailey Gatzert Elementary School in Seattle confirms that her endorsement is key for any program to run successfully in the building. "What I can do as a Principal is create time on staff meeting agendas to address school/after-school issues, work the budget, and create access and collaboration around resources." The after-school program at Bailey Gatzert Elementary began about six years ago and was part of the Linkages project, so the school was well prepared for the Alignment Initiative. Bailey Gatzert Elementary is Seattle's most urban school with a population of about 430 students, 50% with English as a second language, 90% non-white, and 30% homeless. Asked what motivated her as a school leader to promote and support an after-school program in her building, Jean Anthony replies, "the clearest signal is from the students sharing their experiences. They want to attend. Their participation in after-school makes a difference in their lives in multiple ways."

The Community Education Office of the St. Louis Public Schools focuses its work on 16 Community Education Centers, which are part of the St. Louis School District. The Community Education Office facilitates connections between school and after-school in these centers by cultivating relationships with local social service provider agencies, which can collaborate with the schools and principals to provide a wide range of youth and adult services. Ron Miller, City-Wide Specialist in the Office of Community Education, points out that principals and agencies in the Community Education Centers are encouraged to "find ways to make linkages" between all the services offered.

At Yeatman Middle Community Education Center in St. Louis, Principal Georgia Bland-Whitfield sees herself as both the instructional leader for the building and the facilitator of connections between all the "different players in the building including extended day." She explains that as a community education center offering multiple services to children and adults "we have a school day and a school evening."

Collecting and disseminating data has been an integral part of solidifying the day school/extended day school connection at Yeatman. Student test scores, report cards, and teacher feedback is regularly shared between day school and extended day school professionals. To everyone's benefit, Yeatman day and extended day faculty and staff together are able to shape academic support and tutoring programs around the needs of students based on the assessments. A second key element for connection at Yeatman has been bringing the budget for multiple services under one umbrella. "It allows us to look at everything as one program," says Bland-Whitfield. "Collectively, we can look at the whole picture of services offered during day and extended day and decide how we want the program to look and how we want the experiences to be integrated." Unmistakably, the involvement and leadership of the principal is required to reach this level of information exchange and budget utilization.

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Staffing Connections

One avenue for creating connection between school and after-school is through staffing. CAMBA, which operates a TASC supported program, has built strong relationships with IS 62 through the Mentor Teacher position. The Mentor Teacher is an IS 62 faculty or administrator who serves as a liaison between the school and after-school program. The position is funded for a portion of the time that children spend in after-school. Miriam McDonald serves as a Mentor Teacher for IS 62 and explains that she "will work with after-school teachers to prepare them to work with students." As Mentor Teacher she will demonstrate day school math lessons, communicate weekly day school teaching goals, find curriculum resources, and assist after-school teachers to set clear goals for skill improvement.

It is the role of the Mentor Teacher to:

- Facilitate consistency between school and after-school by overseeing continuity of procedures, policies, behavior expectations, classroom management signals, etc.;
- Facilitate communication between school and after-school teachers about quality and quantity of homework completed during after-school;
- Facilitate communication between school and after-school teachers about needs and issues of individual children;
- Create greater understanding and sharing in regard to classroom space and resources between school and after-school staff.

According to Christie Hodgkins, CAMBA Director of After-School Services, the Mentor Teacher's "knowledge of school policies, procedures, staff and lines of communication, and the sharing of that knowledge with after-school staff, play a key role in creating a more seamless day for children. Equally essential is the Mentor Teacher's understanding and support of CAMBA's mission, philosophy and approach to working with children and families. The Mentor Teacher must be able to effectively balance both school and CBO practices and perspectives." Regular meetings between the After-school Site Director, the Mentor Teacher, and the Principal provide for timely needs assessments and collaborative goal setting.

It is the role of the Mentor Teacher to create greater understanding and sharing in regard to classroom space and resources between school and after-school staff.

ELEMENTS THAT SUPPORT CONNECTION

- Commonly held understanding of youth development principles among school and after-school staff
- Cadre of teachers and after-school staff with dual interests in education and youth development
- Person or intermediary to bridge the gap between leaders of school and after-school
- Some stimuli to create action and motivation towards integration
- Time and money dedicated to relationship building
- Common understanding that school and after-school teachers serve the same children and work towards the same goals

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Mandated Alignment

The Linkages Project, part of Seattle MOST, was funded by Wallace-Readers Digest Funds in 1999 and involved six schools and six out-of-school time providers. The goal of the project was to increase cooperation between out-of-school time programs and schools and to identify a system for building successful partnerships. School's Out Washington and The Seattle Human Services Department provided technical assistance to the project. Over the planning year of the grant, schools and programs learned that they could support and strengthen each other's work.

In 2001 the Seattle School District concluded that it needed help getting students to perform better on academic standards and that learning during out-of-school time "is critical to their success in school." It was logical to consider after-school as one ally to the improvement agenda. The District mandated alignment between school and after-school with rent-free lease agreements as the carrot. Alignment means that "schools, out-of-school time providers, and communities are working in partnership so that children and youth meet or exceed learning standards, and that schools and out-of-school time activities reflect, holistically, the developmental needs of children and youth."

To advise the Alignment Initiative, Seattle Public Schools formed the Learning Partners Group consisting of the School District, Seattle Human Services Division, child care providers, Seattle City Office for Education, and School's Out Washington. According to Sarah Mello Temple, Education Partnerships Coordinator at School's Out Washington, "because of the work done as part of Linkages, School's Out Washington and Seattle Human Services Division were able to provide guidance to the district in defining the systemic and relational needs for true alignment."

Over the planning year of the grant, schools and programs learned that they could support and strengthen each other's work.

Based on the work of the Linkages project, the Learning Partners Group outlined ten criteria for integration that must be met in order for an after-school provider to remain rent free in a school building. The criteria were created solely for the alignment process.

Programs participating in the Linkages project and programs whose leases were expiring, represented the first wave of schools/after-school programs engaged in the alignment initiative. The first wave schools and the Learning Partners Group have provided mentorship to the second wave of schools/after-school programs seeking confirmation.

While mandating school/after-school connections may have drawbacks, the result in Seattle has been that school districts have opened up professional development opportunities to after-school providers as well as day school teachers; after-school providers are leading professional development classes during summer institutes and in-service for teachers; and some principals have incorporated their after-school leaders into their school improvement plans and management teams. This activity has translated into increased connections between students' school and after-school experiences.

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Criteria for OST Provider/School Alignment

1. The school and provider engage in activities that mutually promote programs and services and model effective partnerships that support the integration of the core school day and OST program;
2. The school and provider coordinate program planning and curriculum to ensure alignment between activities and learning standards and communicate to support children's learning;
3. The school and provider coordinate and communicate to support children's acquisition of developmental assets;
4. The school and provider develop and adhere to a plan for shared use of key partnership resources such as facilities/space, curriculum, staff, volunteers, equipment, technology and transportation;
5. The school and provider share pertinent information and communicate regularly about individual student needs; a shared approach to issues related to behavior management, family engagement, child health and safety is used;
6. The school and provider actively participate in district designated professional development opportunities;
7. The school and provider share access to emergency materials and have a shared approach to emergency procedures;
8. A mechanism is present to assure that parents, families and the broader community can meaningfully shape the alignment process;
9. The school and provider jointly develop an approach for ensuring that culturally relevant and anti-biased learning strategies are utilized;
10. The provider develops a plan for reinvesting rent savings in staffing (wages and benefits), training, materials, facility improvements or other efforts that enhance program delivery to children and families.

Forging Connections

How would we know that connections were going on?

We would see:

1. ***Examples of good communication strategies:***

- Regular meetings occur between school and after-school professionals;
- Principal and teachers can articulate the goals and contributions of the after-school program;
- After-School Director and staff can articulate the goals and contributions of the day school program;
- Parent/families are aware of the opportunities for after-school care;
- Principal and teachers promote to parents/families the use of after-school programs as a teaching and development support;
- Parent/families can articulate the ways their children's school and after-school experiences intersect and are supported by each other.

2. ***Examples of written agreements that guide/frame interactions***

- Written agreements that describe how school and after-school work collectively to meet education and youth development objectives;
- Assessment tools that can be used across school and after-school domains and shared between the two.

3. ***Examples of reciprocity***

- Day school teachers have a visible role in after-school program and after-school teachers have a visible role in day school program;
- There are intentional connections between curriculum in after-school and curriculum in day school, i.e., children are working on ratios in math, after-school teachers can incorporate ratios into painting activities, etc. In addition, day school teachers can ask children who attend after-school

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Resources

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Other Resources:

"Community Programs to Promote Youth Development"
National Academy Press
www.nap.edu

Forging Connections

(cont. from p. 7)

to write an essay on how they made group decisions at kickball the afternoon before, etc.;

- Day school and after-school teachers exchange information about attendance, behavior, homework, interests in learning, family, etc.

4. ***Examples of broad support***

- There is observable encouragement from an overarching system (intermediary, municipal, school district) towards establishing and sustaining integration between schools and after-school programs;
- There are multiple school/after-school partnerships that demonstrate integration along a variety of dimensions;
- There are incentives, propagated by those in authority and position, for schools and after-schools to work towards integration;
- The notion of integration of school and after-school has a recognizable public voice.

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